



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

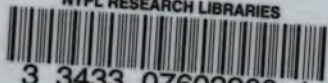
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07602260 1

# THE BACKWOODSMAN



H·A·STANLEY







THE  
BACKWOODSMAN

N:BO

Stanley



# THE BACKWOODSMAN

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CONTINENTAL ON THE NEW  
YORK FRONTIER DURING THE REVOLUTION

BY

H. A. STANLEY

AUTHOR OF "REX WAYLAND'S FORTUNE,"  
"WHO SAVED OREGON," ETC., ETC.



v

NEW YORK  
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY

1901

LV



11  
51  
**144584B**  
AND

THE PROPERTY  
OF THE  
NEW-YORK  
+  
SOCIETY LIBRARY.

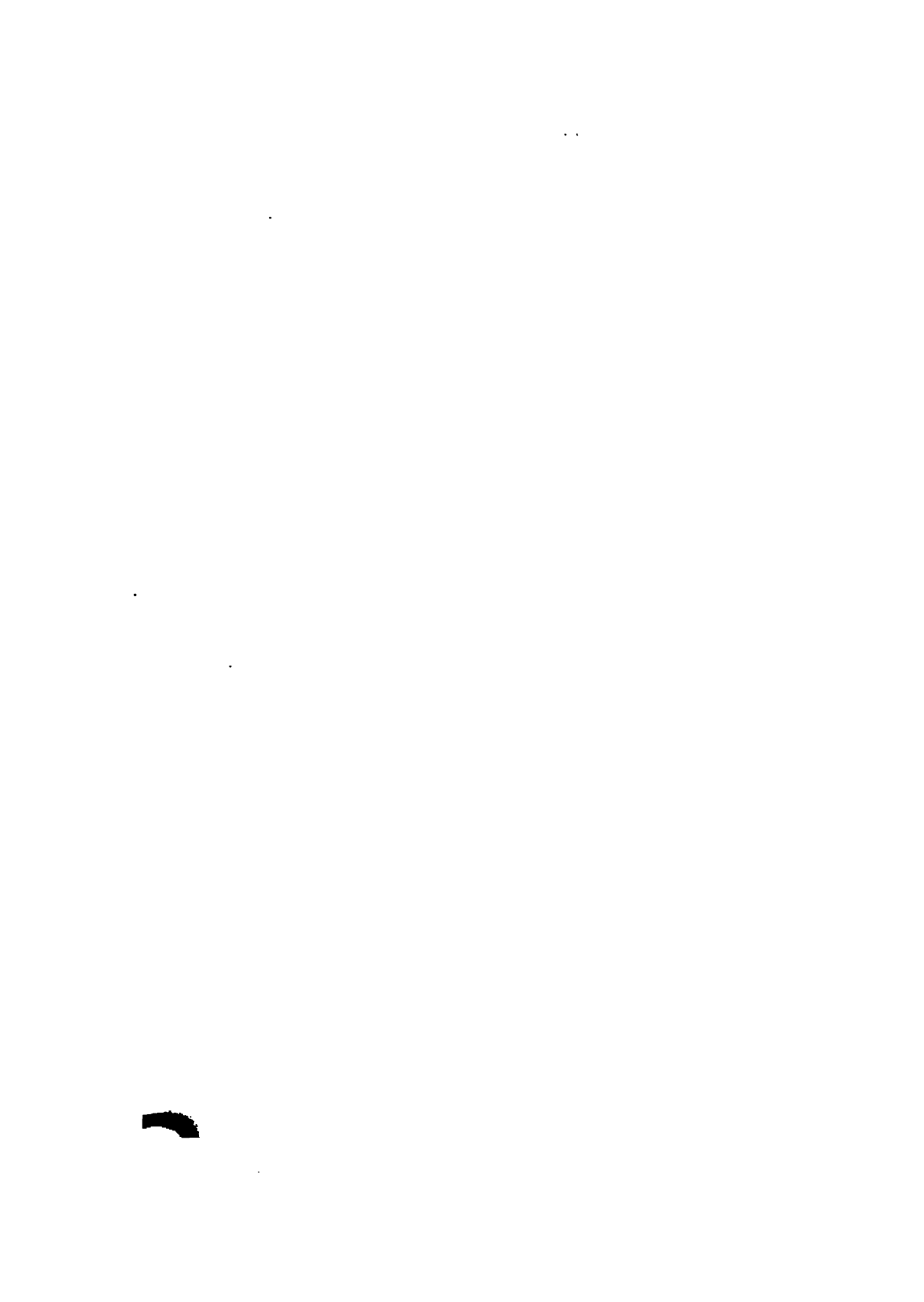
Copyright, 1901,  
by  
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & CO.

OCT 5. 1901

F

*To the  
student of Revolutionary history,  
to those who for fifty years past have made sport of  
“Cooper’s Indian;”  
and to those who have known and met adversity,  
these memoirs are respectfully dedicated  
by  
The Editor*

20 / 50



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Manhood Asserts Itself.....	1
II. A Fugitive From Justice.....	13
III. In Hiding .....	16
IV. After Two Years.....	22
V. Owaimee .....	35
VI. Around the Council Fire.....	43
VII. Flight .....	55
VIII. Capture .....	63
IX. A Friend in Need.....	71
X. Mr. Kirkland Does Me a Service.....	84
XI. On the Way to Philadelphia and Polite Society .....	88
XII. The Translation of a Savage.....	95
XIII. The Green-eyed Monster.....	103
XIV. I Hear a Story.....	112
XV. After a Wakeful Night.....	126
XVI. On the Road Again.....	134
XVII. Astonishment not the Predominating Emotion .....	144
XVIII. Loosened Bonds .....	154
XIX. Disguise and Danger.....	167
XX. Bemus Heights .....	175
XXI. I Make a Speech.....	185
XXII. War News .....	197
XXIII. Tamalaqua .....	201
XXIV. From August 9 to December 1st.....	215
XXV. Death .....	220
XXVI. A Midnight Visit.....	231
XXVII. A Momentous Letter.....	238
XXVIII. The Battle of Newtown.....	254
XXIX. Incidents Which Result in Misfortune...	265

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXX. By a Hair's Breadth.....	280
XXXI. Beacraft at Last.....	296
XXXII. Beacraft Speaks.....	311
XXXIII. Murphy Puts in a Word.....	321
XXXIV. Called to Philadelphia.....	329
XXXV. Aunt Sally .....	336
XXXVI. I Meet George Washington.....	352
XXXVII. Edith .....	363
XXXVIII. Home at Last.....	366

# THE BACKWOODSMAN

## CHAPTER I

### MANHOOD ASSERTS ITSELF

“**C**OME here ye varlet an’ git what ye deserve!” yelled my uncle with a savage Dutch oath.

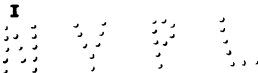
I did not budge an inch, but with jaws set and hands clenched, looked him in the eye.

“Do ye hear me, ye dog? Be ye comin’? or must I knock ye down an’ drag ye in?”

“No, I won’t come in. Neither will you drag me. You’ve given me the last beating you ever will. I was eighteen yesterday and—”

Here I paused for breath. I had kept control of myself until now, but the sense of my wrongs ignited and fed the flame of my anger as I waited for his reply, and that anger suddenly found vent in words that I was soon to bitterly regret. I strode toward him, every nerve of my bony, lank figure tense with energy, and even as my fingers itched to throttle him my high pitched voice rang out:

“Hans Diehl, you are no uncle of mine. You are a cruel, cowardly old man. I hate you. I could stick yonder spear into your miserable old carcass, and twist it, too, with a good will.”



I had not moved toward the spear as I shouted this threat, but quick as a cat my uncle possessed himself of it; flourishing it, while his evil face grew gray with fear and passion, he snarled out: "Ye ondutiful dog! Who told ye I wa'n't yer uncle? So it's fight ye'd show me. Down on yer knees an' beg me pardon 'fore I run ye through. Duck your ugly face an' put it atween yer knees, 'fore the lash marks it, ye young hound. I'll larn ye to resist me. To talk up to them as has fed ye an' clothed ye,—"

and he advanced from the shop door, his ox whip in one hand, the spear he had caught up in the other.

I stood like a wolf at bay. There was murder in my heart for the instant. As he came toward me, I began calculating the distance at which I could leap upon him, when there was an interruption neither of us had expected.

"Stop Diehl! You too fast! Quedar, you make fool threat. You not mean what you say. Go look to the cattle. They destroy much corn. See!"

Years of responsibility for these same bothersome cattle had rendered the task second nature, and, angry as I was, my impulse was to turn at these words. But after glancing over my shoulder, my face darkened again, and looking past our Indian neighbor who had stepped between us, I growled out: "Step aside, Chief, and let him come on. We may as well settle this now as at any time. He has abused me long enough. Now let the best man prove himself."

The words were not fairly out of my mouth, when I saw a brown hand coming at my head, and before I could duck or dodge, it took me on the ear with such force that I sprawled at Thayendanega's feet. Before I could recover my wits he was upon me and



had me by the wrists. He was a strong man and an adept at tricks of wrestling, but I arose under him and cast him on his back several feet from me.

"Well done for a boy, Peter," laughed young Walter Butler who had at that same instant stepped into view from behind the shop. "But hold, boy, you've made row enough now. Raise another hand and I'll use my sword on you."

"Oh sir! But let me get at him!" I panted. "He's beaten and abused me all these years and only last night he boasted that he used to abuse my aunt too. He's a brute!—worse than a brute. You know it—everyone knows it. If I'd had the chance I'd have murdered him years ago!"

Butler shook his head, drew his pistol and called again:—"Stand back!" Whereat I burst into excited tears and, vowing I would yet be revenged, sat down on a log and, boylike, gave way to my grief and anger.

Chief Joseph, who stood brushing the filth of the yard from his attire, here came over and sat down beside me, at the same time picking up my old bonnet and giving it a slap and a shake as he put it upon my head. Then in a low voice: "Quedar fool to cry like squaw and make threats. Say nothing. When time comes—kill!"

I ceased my blubbering and looked at him in surprise. Could this be Joseph Brant, the much talked of Christian Indian? The pride of Wheelock, Kirkland and other mission workers among the Iroquois? He dropped his face before my astonished gaze but said nothing further, so, drying my eyes on my sleeve, I arose and started for the straying cattle. They gave me something of a chase and when, hav-



ing finally secured them, I started again toward the house, I saw neither Butler, Brant nor my uncle about the shop door. I was in such a mood that I did not want to meet anyone, so sneaking in at the side door of the house, I secured my gun, bullet pouch and powder horn. I had decided that a long solitary tramp would help to rid me of my anger.

When I came out again I saw no one and was quite sure that no one saw me as I hastened up alongside the high bushes that marked the fence dividing my uncle's land from that cleared portion of the tract Sir William Johnson had put Brant upon. Once in the edge of the woods my spirits lightened, and sitting down on a fallen beech, I fell into a reverie.

From where I sat I could look out upon rich fields down across the sparkling waters of the Cuyadutta, which wound around between the low hills, to the Mohawk. The noble forest rose up beyond the big river, as yet the boundary of my world, and a half mile further along the slope sat the squat log house and its cluster of outbuildings in and around which my unhappy childhood had been passed. Beyond, along the creek and away, but much farther back from the Mohawk, rose up the stately mansion Sir William had reared for himself, while to the right of my uncle's cluster of buildings, I could see the gable of the house, in which Brant, his squaw and brood of youngsters lived.

As I sat there that morning my reflections were most bitter. My lot seemed so hard. Why was one man allowed to oppress another? There was Sir William—practically king of all the world I had ever known. I could not see that he had ever done

anything to earn all the riches, glory and power that surrounded him; and yet he had all these and seemed quite likely to be going to keep them. Why did God permit such a gradation of men made in His own image? There was his son, Sir John, and his son-in-law, Sir Guy; they were overbearing, insolent and cruel. They looked upon my uncle as their chattel and upon me as of less account than one of their niggers, and treated me as such.

At the thought my jaws set again and as the blood tingled in my cheeks and burned my neck, I mentally vowed I would not so remain. I would strike out into these great woods and make a fortune for myself. And I felt sure that I could do it, sure that if I could once break away from my uncle's tyranny and begin life for myself, I could rise. Others had done as much and why not I. Finally I was resolved, I would try it. I had proven that I could handle the best Indian wrestler along the Mohawk, and I determined to win my way by superior strength at all events, and by wit and intellect if I could.

I had thought upon these lines very frequently of late without having had the courage to act; but a decisive climax had been brought about by some words spoken by my uncle the night before—words which had kept me awake half the night and which rang in my ears yet.

It had been a plain case of a man speaking the truth when in liquor: "She was proud an' wilful, jist like ye, ye young whelp—was Barbie, but I humbled her afore she died. Ha, Ha! I broke her proud spirit an' so I will yours. Pull off my boots now, d—— ye, afore I break yer head, you nigger!"

No matter all that I had suffered before, this was the last straw. I could not stand it any longer. Why should I? I was certain that the man whom I called "uncle," was in reality no relation at all—certain of it—and that he had no real claim over me. Ever since that night, five years before, when my Aunt Barbie had died, the suspicion had been growing stronger and stronger. That there was some mystery connected with me was to my mind, undoubted. Otherwise why was it that Barbie had written on that paper the day Uncle Hans had come in and snatched it from her, unless it was something for me to read? It was terrible that day! How hard she had tried to speak—to reproach him, but the swelling in her throat had prevented, and so with wide open eyes she had lain and looked at him all of that afternoon. He would not let me near her, and when he drove me to bed that night, the last thing I saw as I left the room were those great dumb eyes of hers turned to me with agonizing appeal in them, and I knew that she had something of importance to tell me. The next morning when I came down she lay there dead. What had her secret been? Something regarding my birth my instinct told me. That this woman was my mother as people generally supposed, I did not believe for a moment; nor, for that matter, that she was even of kin. Were this proved, as it was not by any manner of means, then who was my mother—my father? Was it possible that I was the offspring of some shameful alliance? An outcast? Surely not or my "uncle" would have taunted me with it long ago. Oh, if I could only find some clue to what I felt to be an insolvable mystery.

I sat brooding over this problem for a long time that bright July day. Finally, without having thrown any light upon the matter, I slid off the log and plunged into the woods in quest of game.

As I turned back from the hill to look at the house, I fancied I saw a man running across the field back of the big barn, and toward the house. It was of little consequence, however, and I scarcely gave it a thought as I pressed on toward the ridge, on which I was quite sure the deer would be lying after their early morning's feed. During the long day I jumped five deer from as many different thickets, but at no time was I near enough to reach one with my old fusee. I became discouraged at last, and had paused for a rest beside a little glade, some six miles from home, when into the open backed a yearling buck thrashing at the brush with his horns, as yet "in the velvet." I caught him close behind the shoulder, and so near was I that my big shot bunched, acting like one ball. He fell in his tracks.

It must have been seven o'clock, when having drawn my game and made pack traps of the hide of its legs, I burst into the main road down near the river. As I emerged from the thicket, a stranger in greasy buckskins and without a gun rose up from the brush beside me. I should not have seen him had he not spoken, for his concealment, even though close beside the trail, had been perfect. As he stood there I noted that he was short, slender, sloped of shoulder and swarthy—a remarkably small man. Nor was slenderness of body his only peculiarity. His head was narrow and seemed much too long for its width. His nose was very prominent and his beady eyes seemed set almost in its sides, so close

were they together. His great meaty ears hugged close against the back of his head, low down, and his retreating chin could not have been more than an inch wide. His spiky locks hung close against the back of his weasel neck and down each side of his narrow rheumy temples as if glued there. He might have been some forty years of age. All in all, he was the most peculiar looking individual I had ever seen; also the most malevolent. As if to add to the feeling of repulsion he had aroused in me, he extended one of his long slim hands in greeting—a hand smeared with fresh blood, which was also plentifully bespattered upon his leather breeches and leggins. I did not take the hand held out, but backed away from him. He scarcely seemed to notice this slight.

“Youngster, gimme a saddle o’ that, will ye?”

“Why yes, if you need it. But who are you? What’s your name? You’re a stranger here.” As I spoke I threw the carcass from my shoulders and began cutting for him the part he desired. He did not answer my questions but stood watching me, eagerness on every repulsive feature. “You look as if you had been hunting,” I added. “What sort of game is that the blood of?” pointing at the stains on his hands and dress.

“Jest varmint. That’s all my boy. Gimme what ye ’greed. I need it.” He trembled as he spoke in this jerky way, and seemed very nervous. Finally, as if on second thought, “Gimme all on it. I’ll need it I guess.” His assurance astonished me. I looked up at him. “Oh! I’ll pay ye. I got cash.” Here he opened his mouth and wheezed most disagreeably in a manner intended for laughter, and as evidence

of his ability to pay, pulled from his pocket a handful of gold and silver and threw twelve dollars at my feet, laughing again and seemingly enjoying the surprise his munificence created. As I stooped to gather up the money and examine it, he whipped out a knife and began stripping the meat from the bones. He worked handily and fast; the task was soon finished, and putting the meat in a pouch at his back, he gathered up the bones and threw them into the river.

"Where's your gun, sir?" I inquired with boyish curiosity. He wheezed again before replying.

"Oh, I got skun out on it down at Albany. Loaded dice I reckon. Made a raise on the way up though. Git a gun outen the first Injun I meet. S'pose you'd sell me that old fusee now? Don't want it though. Gimme suthin what'll carry a little furdur. Say boy! What's yer name?"

"Peter Diehl, sir."

"No 'taint. My name orter be Diehl, but 'taint. Mother's name was Beacraft and that's mine. Yours is Ehlerson.—Peter Ehlerson. I orter know I guess. Gin it to ye meself. Had ter have some name, since no one knowed who yer father was, that is, no one hereabouts. Bye-bye—" and with another open-mouthed, mirthless laugh he was gone. He fairly seemed to vanish, so swift and quiet was his departure.

He left me silent and motionless with surprise; what had his strange language meant? I wished I had thrown myself upon him and made him tell me, but it was too late now. I had some money at all events—more than I had ever owned before, and, looking at it occasionally, I hurried down the trail,

resolved that Uncle Hans should not know of my good fortune.

As I came up from the road I heard voices back of the house in the shop where the quarrel of the morning had occurred, and I noticed in the gathering darkness, that the horses of Walter Butler, Sir John Johnson and some others, were tied to the fence close by.

"He threatened him this morning. Both Brant and I heard him," Butler was saying as I came up to the door.

"Here he comes now, Massa Butler," whispered a negro boy as I walked toward the door, out from which a light shone. Several negroes and white men ran out at these words, and for a moment or so I stood looking at them and they at me.

"Pete, I'm sorry for this," said Sheriff White, finally. "You doubtless had some provocation, but this matter of murder—"

"Murder? What murder? Who's murdered?" I gasped and he shook his head gravely.

"Let's take him in and see how he acts," whispered one of the Sammons boys, but loudly enough for me to hear. I did not wait to be taken, however, but walked in—and nearly fainted at the sight I saw there.

The body of my uncle lay limply across his own hewing block, the great spear driven through it and into the wood. On one side his feet were drawn up under his knees. On the other, turned to the light, was his ghastly blood-smearred face with the open, staring eyes and the great wrinkles and puckers above and between, showing in what horrible agony he must have died.

"My God!" I exclaimed. "Who did this?"

"Who threatened to do as much this morning, and who has blood all over himself?" answered Walter Butler sternly.

"Here is the old man's money sack, too. He's emptied that," added Sir John, as he stooped and picked it up.

"But that is the blood of the deer," I faltered.

"What deer? Where is the deer?" demanded several voices. Then my desperate situation flashed upon me. I had that morning in the presence of witnesses threatened my uncle. And here I stood before those who had heard me, my garments smeared with blood. I had no deer; I had gold in my pockets—doubtless the gold of the victim lying there before me. How could I blame them for accusing me? Confused with horror, I covered my pale face with my hands.

Finally recovering myself somewhat—"But gentlemen, I did not do this," I began. "I"—

"Say nothing my lad," advised Sheriff White kindly. "It is well understood hereabouts that you have suffered much at the hands of this man, but while I hope Sir William will take this into consideration, I fear your life must pay for this foul murder. Say nothing, but come with me, and tell your story to the counsel the court assigns you. That is the wisest course. Meanwhile, I must do my duty. Peter Diehl, I arrest you in the King's—"

I knocked him heels up with a back-handed blow and sprang over his prostrate form through the crowd at the door. Walter Butler who was just outside cut at me with his sword, but I dodged, caught him by the wrist, swung him around and off his feet,



and having wrested the blade from him cut loose his horse, mounted it at a bound, and dashed around behind the big barn.

The July evening was as yet without a moon and it was the easiest thing in the world to throw myself from the horse at the roadside, turn its head down the river, deal it a sharp blow with the flat of the sword, and while it galloped madly in one direction to run myself in another. I did not keep to the main road, but ran across the field of freshly cut clover to the bushes lining the creek, where I had secreted myself several seconds before the surprised crowd at the house reached the main gate. As they paused there, I could hear all they said.

"He's already down through the village and a good half mile up the river road," exclaimed a Sammons. "A man'd break his neck running 'cross lots to head him off."

"Yes, and come in a mile behind him, for he's on the fleetest horse in the whole Mohawk valley," chimed in Butler. "I hope he won't kill the mare."

"He isn't thinking of *her* about now," said White. "Gott in Himmel! What a blow he strikes!"

"We'll take your word for that," said the Sammons who had before spoken, whereat there was a general laugh. Several minutes were thus spent in useless talking at the gate. Meanwhile the flying hoof-beats of the mare had grown fainter, and fainter, and before any definite action had been decided upon had become inaudible.

At last amid a confused babel of voices Butler and the Sheriff, with a motley crowd trooping after, rode away.



## CHAPTER II

### A FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE

**I** LAY still and for a time thought hard and fast. What was I to do? I had for the present eluded pursuit and thrown everybody on the wrong scent, but it was plain that the trail up the river would be watched for days. I must strike north, or south, avoiding all travelled ways and make for the woods.

At present the safest place for me was my old home. No one would think of looking for me there. That dead body would guard the house from the superstitious negro prowlers better than forty men could, and I was quite certain that White in his haste, had not left any one in charge. As I stole back up the lane I became convinced I was right. I peered in at a crack in the rear wall of the shop. The corpse lay unattended in the position I had last seen. The frequent drafts of air through the poorly constructed building, caused the guttering candles, of which there were two, to flutter, and cast dancing shadows across the face of the dead man,—that horribly contorted face which had never in life thrilled me with such terror as now. Trembling in every limb, I withdrew from the grim spectacle and crept quietly into the house by the rear door. I dared not use the candles in the shed outside, but I must have something to eat, and so in darkness I

groped about in the smoke house above the fireless hearth, where I knew some salted beef should hang. Joy! It was there—two strips of twelve or fifteen pounds each. I selected the best, wrapped it together with a small cloth sack of corn meal, in the heaviest blanket I could find and without stopping to eat, stole out to the shop again for my gun. It was gone. I was sure I had left it leaning against the building. It must have been on the other side. But no: I came up from this side. Nevertheless, I would step around and see. I crept softly around the corner and stopped, my heart in my mouth. Through one of the cracks in the building the light was reflected from my own gun barrel, but the gun was no longer leaning against the building. It was in the hands of a man and before I could turn back, he had levelled it at my head.

When that gun was raised, I confidently expected its immediate discharge and the wonder is that I did not make outcry or attempt to get away. It so happened however, that the gun did not crack as I had expected, and opening my eyes, which I had unconsciously closed, I saw that the man holding it was only examining the priming by the light sighted through the crack in the shed, and to do this more easily had raised the gun. From the small ray of light shed on his face I saw that it was Brant, and then recollected that he had not been with the party which had met me on my return. My wits came back to me and leaving him squinting at the gun, I stepped cautiously back, tiptoed to the nearest fence and scurried away behind its fringe of brush. I was soon beyond hearing, and crouching down beside a heap of logs, I unwrapped my beef, cut off a piece of

it and broke my long fast. A handful of dry corn meal completed my hasty repast, and then carefully retying my blanket with the meat and meal inside, I fastened it to my back and grasping Butler's sword in my right hand, set out again. My mother wit told me that I would not be sought either in the close vicinity of my old home, nor yet near the Hall, the dwelling place of the chief magistrate of the valley. I had half a mind to secrete myself in that vicinity and await events. The sudden appearance of the round rim of the moon above the eastern hills, decided me, and entering the Cayadutta, which brawled along here, I waded carefully up its bed, between the bending willows, to a point opposite the Hall. Here a stone wall ran down to the water's edge, and to prevent any of Sir William's many dogs taking scent of my track, I mounted this wall and stole along it up over the rise of ground to a point back of the Hall. Here was an old tool house with a loft, in which was always kept a miscellaneous collection of small tools, strips of lumber, ox bows, cart tongues, etc. Swinging myself from the wall into a spreading tree, I climbed from the branches into the loft, and made my way to the end of the building.

Here I ensconced myself as comfortably as the surroundings would permit, and knowing that, for the time, I was comparatively safe, felt exceedingly thankful. Before long I fell fast asleep.

## CHAPTER III

### IN HIDING

**W**HEN I awoke the next morning at daylight, it was with a thirst that nearly drove me frantic. The salt beef I had eaten, the dry meal and heat of the night, had conspired to parch my throat and lips. I felt that I must have water; so securing an old bottle from the loft, I stole along down the wall towards the creek. How good that water tasted! It was not particularly cold, but pure and sweet, and after drinking my fill I rinsed out my bottle and filled it, and was turning to go back, when on the bank in the path running alongside the wall, I beheld "Miss Molly," as she was known in the valley,—Sir William's Indian wife and Chief Joseph's sister. I never, in my life, I think, have beheld a more queenly woman, white or red.

In figure, she was tall, beautifully proportioned and very erect; and though darker of skin than her distinguished brother, her features were smaller, her cheek bones less prominent and her mouth much more pleasing. Her hair was most abundant and two great glossy braids hung down her back far below her waist. Her eyes were coal black and sparkled with intelligence when she spoke or smiled. Her voice was silvery, her teeth white, her lips full and red. Despite her long and intimate association with

the whites, she never spoke our language without a peculiar accent, due to her inability to pronounce the labials. As did Joseph and all the Mohawks of our neighborhood, she always called me Quedar, instead of Peter, and she had a queer knack of misplacing her verbs.

As I straightened up after filling my bottle then, it was to find this woman, standing before me looking straight at me. She placed her finger on her lips and in a low voice inquired: "Quedar, what you here do?" I was so surprised and confused that I knew not what to say. She did not wait for an answer, however, but continued: "You hunted! You not that know?"

"Yes, Miss Molly, I know, but I am not guilty. I threatened Uncle Hans, it is true, but I didn't kill him."

"He bad man! He mean, wicked, wicked wretch! Him coward too. Me see him you beat one time. Sir Willum not no say, me hire Injun beat him. You yes'day grow man an' kill him eh? You brave boy."

"But Miss Molly, I didn't kill him and I don't know who did, I tell you. I am accused of it though, and circumstances are against me. You won't tell any one you saw me, will you?"

"No! No! Me no tell. Sir Willum glad you run. Wait here!" and she parted the bushes near the path. I crawled up the bank and into the bushes and she sped toward the rear of the Hall. A few seconds later she came running toward me, her long braids standing out behind with the rapidity of her motion. In her hands she bore a small knapsack. This she hung on my back panting: "There meat

jerked, flint, steel, powder, ball, salt, wine. Now wait! Me get gun, blanket, extra mocsons."

"I have some things up in the loft of the tool house yonder," I answered.

"All right! You need gun. Me bring him," and she left me again to reappear presently with a very handsome double-barrel rifle. As she came toward me with this, my boy heart was touched, and the tears ran down my cheeks. I took the gun, and caught her hand and kissed it. She gave me an impatient push and blushed. Then catching me by the arm she dragged me to the outer cellar door of the Hall. "Quick! Some one you see. You till night hide. Then get out. By water go,—long long way. Here! My key take."

I allowed her to push me into a smaller cellar, partitioned off from the rest under the great house, and as I heard her footsteps in the hall above, felt that I was hidden where no one but she herself would be apt to disturb me. In this cellar were kept the household jellies and preserves, the key to which, no one but Sir William's lady carried. A few minutes later I heard a rap upon the door and opening it received my blanket, beef and meal, which she had brought from the loft, together with the bottle of water I had left in the bushes near the creek. She said not a word this visit, but securing a pot of jelly, a small jar of pickles and some other articles of the kind from a shelf, deposited a heap of meat and cakes before me from a small basket she carried, placed the articles she had taken down in the basket and, giving my ear a playful tweak, took up her load and departed. Soon she came back, asked for the key, locked the door on the outside, and left me

for the day. An hour from that time the household was astir and all day long, when not asleep, I heard the tramp of servants and inmates on the floor above my head. I heard the slaves carrying Sir William out of the hall about nine o'clock, and then I fell asleep. How long I had slept I do not know, but it must have been six or seven hours, when I again heard a tramp of many feet—above all arose the sound of stertorous breathing and deep groans,—a procession toiled up the broad stairway and, I was quite sure, entered Sir William's room. Thereafter there was much running up and down the stairs, and once or twice I heard Miss Molly's voice giving orders and urging haste. Soon every voice was hushed except one which I recognized as belonging to Dr. Daly, Sir William's physician. Not long after I heard his peculiar tread come half way down the stairs, and while he was apparently leaning over the balusters I heard him say: "It's no use! I can't kape him alive more than an hour longer. Ye'd betther send for Sir John." There was the bounding sound of moccasined feet out of the front door, a few hurried words, and a horse galloped madly out of the grounds, his flying hoofbeats growing fainter and fainter each second. Then for a space of thirty minutes there was utter silence. The stillness was finally broken by the wail of a woman, which as it rose swelled into that peculiar heart-rending cry of the Mohawks mourning their dead. It was the voice of Miss Molly and I understood what it meant—Sir William was dead. Twenty minutes later I again heard the hoofbeats of a flying horse. Faint at first they were, then rapidly growing louder, until they thundered at the very door. The steed was



pulled up with such suddenness that I heard the gravel fly as his ironshod hoofs slid along. A man flung himself from the saddle and the strident voice of Sir John rang out:

“Doctor! Am I in time?”

“He died nearly a half hour ago, Sir,” said the doctor solemnly.

“The devil you say! Why couldn’t you have kept him! I killed one horse getting here and nearly did for another. I wanted to talk with him,” replied Sir John, rightly to be known in the war as “Savage Johnson.” I think he was a little drunker than usual, or even he would not have spoken so at that moment.

That night I fled. Miss Molly came in person to let me out of the cellar, and went with me to the big elm outside the great gate, where she put into my hand six gold pieces. When I attempted to thank her, she would not listen but bade me hasten away. I did, however, possess myself of her hand and in my clumsy boyish speech told her how sorry I was that Sir William was dead, whereat to my great confusion she wept bitterly. Mine was probably the first sympathy she had received. Then I bade her good-bye and set out upon my way.

How I passed the next year and eight months does not directly concern this story. I will not therefore chronicle all my doings. Let it suffice that I fled that night down the Mohawk to the Schoharie, thence up that valley and westward over the hills to the headwaters of the Susquehanna. There and about the lesser lakes to the westward I was harbored by the Oneidas with whom I made myself useful after their native fashion, hunting, trapping and trading. I

saw few white people during those two years and those I did see, with one or two exceptions, supposed me to be an Indian. And indeed, I might have become one, had I not met and renewed my acquaintance with the good missionary, Rev. Samuel Kirkland.

## CHAPTER IV

### AFTER TWO YEARS

**I**T was late in April, 1776, when my story again opens. Murphy and I were on the trail that for a century at least and for three centuries for aught I know, had cut across from the Delaware to the Susquehanna valley, near the ancient Indian village of Okwaga, which village by the way, was less than ten miles north of the border line between New York and Pennsylvania. We were making east for the Delaware, Murphy ahead. A hundred-pound pack bent the wiry young Irishman nearly double. After Murphy came our ancient horse, toiling along under another pack, which though bulky, was not more than twice the weight of Murphy's. I brought up the rear and with a pack equal in weight to that on the horse, though not so large. I seemed to do my work with less strain than either Murphy or the horse. We had been out from camp hardly an hour, but Murphy was well blown, and when after making a great effort he had reached a point where the trail pitched down toward the Delaware, he threw off his burden and lay panting beside it, watching the horse and me as we toiled up the hill.

“Be the powers o’ Moll Kelly’s quart cup, but I have enough o’ that,” he gasped as I came up. I made no reply but urged the horse over a rough place in the path and having led the animal to a

grass-covered glade a slight distance to the right, laid off my pack and came back to sit down near my companion.

“ Well Tim, if you refuse the load, I’ll draw cuts with you to see who carries it—I or the horse.”

He laughed. “ Faith, an’ I think it ’ud be a pity to put more on that poor dumb baste. A Dutchman hasn’t the faleins av a harse annyhow—but pfwhat the divil’s that?” As he asked the question, the keen-eyed little Irishman got on his knees, shaded his eyes with his hands and gazed away to the east, where the Delaware could be traced for miles by its radiant flashes through the leafless tree tops. Here and there a curve or an incoming tributary showed an expansè of water which the dense forest did not hide. But elsewhere, over all that wide stretch, north, south and eastward to where the rounded hills kissed the sky, was the primeval forest. Sombre it was in here, as yet, for the leaves were but buds. Here and there an oasis of pine or other ever-green stood out in relief and far away to the south-east, near where a large creek debouched, was a treeless swale, partly green and partly white, for along its southern border, even as in all such sun-sheltered spots, the drifted snow yet lay.

“ Do ye see that snow in the swale ferninst Cook house pint?”

“ I do.”

“ Some Injuns j’ist crost, as I spoke, me bye.”

“ Well! What of that?”

“ That’s what I’m wantin’ ye to tell me. They’re comin’ this way. We’ll mate ’em three miles east, if that pack don’t break me back. De we want to mate ’em?”

“Why shouldn’t we?”

“Faith, an’ I can’t jist tell ye, me Dutch frind, but as me Uncle Miles ushed to say—instinct tells me to lay low an kape out o’ sight.”

“How many generations back in your family was it, Tim, when instinct guided your actions?”

“So manny ye cuddent calkylate them wid yere wake intillict, me bye. Me ancesthry was hoolden down a throne over in owld Ireland, while ye’rn were yet a swingin’ from trees by their tails, down in Afriky an the isles o’ the say.”

I laughed at this reply, but Murphy did not crack even a smile. He was on his knees again and with a hand circled around either eye, was gazing steadily at the swale, six miles distant. “You don’t mean to tell me Tim, that you could distinguish a man that distance?”

“Faith an’ I cud, me bye, an a squaw from a buck if she ware purty. But layin’ all jokes aside—de ye know I think we’re fools if we mate that party on the trail beyant. Jist because ye an’ I ware trated well at Okwaga, an’ the rist o’ thim towns back there, ye’re sure we’re safe all the way down the Dilawarr. I tell ye, me laddy buck, I’m sushpectin of trouble an’ it’s comin’ now. The bucks back at the villages I mintion be peaceful an’ quiet mayhap, becos Sir John Johnson, Walter Butler an’ the rist o’ thim divils didn’t dare stir ’em up till Brant gits back. When Brant comes, from oover the wather, thin beware. That may be him ’twixt us an’ the river beyant. To day’s sun will move away ivery track we’ve made comin’ to here. Let’s make not a divil a wan moove, but hide out along the ridge beyant an see what we’ll see. We’re only delayin’ three hours at the

most. It's airly yit—not six o' the clock this minute. We kin make the Dilawarr yit before night, be it safe, an' float down by night wid our hair on our hids."

"Tim, you lazy little cur, it's a rest you're after. That 'boy's pack breaks your back, but I'll humor you."

"Ye're a big insooltin' liar, so ye air," snarled little Tim, but so sure was he of his own impressions, that we made out through the woods to the south. There in the glade, we relieved our horse of his pack, tethered him and then, pushing through a thicket of young pines between, lay down in the sun on a rocky ledge, which hung well out over the trail. A fringe of low huckleberry brush hid us from view and through them we could see and hear all that occurred anywhere for a hundred yards along the path.

The sun was beating down strong, even at this early hour, and it looked as if the last vestige of snow, would be that day removed. The early spring of '76 was upon us, sure enough. It was very comfortable lying there on that dry rock, the sun pouring down upon our backs and before very long I fell asleep.

I was awakened an hour and half later by a kick from Murphy. "Wake up, ye big brute. Let another snore like that outen ye an' I'll stick me knife atween yer ribs. They're comin', an' Captain Brant's wid' em."

I looked, and there sure enough was Chief Joseph, with an escort consisting of Cornplanter—John Abeel's Seneca son—and five Seneca braves of lesser rank. I half arose, for were not these two, Brant

and Cornplanter, old acquaintances? I had known both very well when a child and all my youth up, but it so happened that I had not seen nor spoken to either since I had run away from the Mohawk valley. I knew that Brant's sister must have told him of how she assisted me to escape, and I was also quite certain that he would never bother himself about taking me back to Johnstown for trial. As I arose to my knees, Murphy reached up, caught me by my long hair and yanked me flat on my back. "Down ye blunderin' fool! Don't ye see their war paint?"

I looked again and my heart thumped loudly with excitement as I noted the fresh vermilion on the face, breast and arms of every squaw's son of them, except Brant. As they paused near the base of our ledge, where there was a spring, and began their preparation for a morning meal, I hugged the ground as closely as did Murphy and listened with all my ears.

I had never seen Brant in full Indian regalia before, and could scarcely keep my eyes off him. He was a most magnificent creature, and in this barbaric toggery of his looked every inch a king. Brant was not a tall man,—five feet eleven I should say, but very symmetrical in his proportions, and elegantly as well as strongly formed. His headdress of leather was not only bedecked with eagle feathers, but in the forehead was a centre piece of jewels, as fine as could be found anywhere. In place of the customary necklace of bears' claws, such as Cornplanter wore, was an ephod or breast-plate of beautifully embossed leather, enriched by a Grecian cross, in the centre of which was the British

coat of arms in red and gold. This was clasped about his neck by a broad flat chain of gold and leather. His bare, muscular arms were each encircled, just above the elbow, by a broad band of what looked like pure gold. A richly colored, closely woven, but light blanket was tied scarf-like about him over his left shoulder and under his right arm. His right shoulder was bare, as was all his body from the waist up, except that portion covered by the blanket before mentioned and his ornaments. His lower person was clad in worked buckskin, and about his waist was a military belt, in a small leather socket of which was thrust his tomahawk. In his right hand was a rifle of latest English model and of perfect finish. Neither he nor Cornplanter carried any burden except their arms, and those of the latter looked rusty and old in comparison with the modern weapons of Brant.

While breakfast was being prepared, the two chiefs strolled over nearer the ledge, and sitting there in the sun, within fifty feet of us, commenced talking in Mohawk. That is to say,—Cornplanter would occasionally ask some question in Seneca, which Brant would answer in Mohawk. Brant did most of the talking at first. He was telling Cornplanter of his journey to London and his reception there. At this period Brant had not received the homage and attention he did receive later in life, and this first taste of kingly and popular favor was yet sweet in his mouth. I could see that it gratified his vanity greatly to relate his experiences to Cornplanter.

“Yes,” Brant was saying, “we Iroquois know not the extent of the possessions of our father the



king. His great war canoes which are to bring his warriors across the wide water; his long houses, wherein his sachems hold council; his great wigwams—called palaces, for his wives and children; his vaults, wherein are stored wampum and precious jewels,—more than all our warriors could carry; his—”

The two had started toward the fire, and for some-time we could not hear their conversation. Presently Brant’s words came to us distinctly.

“Chief, you have done well to meet me in war paint. That best becomes us now. My decision is made. We are with the British. They are our best friends, and they will win. They will give us all this beautiful land we now see and more that we cannot see from here. They—”

“And is this land not already ours?” broke in Cornplanter hotly. “Shall we accept it as the price of murder—the murder of those we have lived with as brothers? Shall our young men taste blood like dogs of the chase, when these British have drunk their fill? Shall we take this, our own land, as the hound takes the offal his master does not care for?” Brant meanwhile stood with head bent as if cringing before a blow. Once he had started to walk away, bent and staggering, but that instant he turned, straightened to his full height and pointing his finger at Cornplanter’s trembling indignant lips, thundered the one command—“Stop!” Then they stood there facing one another, glaring into one another’s eyes, until those of Cornplanter fell and pulling his blanket over his face he slowly turned. Folding his arms, he then stood and bowed his head as if in submission while Brant went on.

"You have called me Tekarihogea—the chief choice of our people. It is well! I am he you have named. I am responsible to no man, be he sachem or chief. I have decided. We are with the British." Here Murphy cocked his rifle, and at the click, the chief started and paused in his utterance. Then, hearing no sound, he finished: "I will save my oratory for the Long House of the Iroquois. Thayendanega wastes not his speech on echoing rocks."

"What did you do that for, Murphy?" I whispered.

"Watch me plug the divil jist undher the lift nipple an' do ye that same for the Cornplanter. Whin I say three, is the worrud. Now! Wan! Two!—"

I reached out and caught the muzzle of Murphy's gun in my palm. "Let that lock down again, you murderous little whelp!" said I.

"Not fer the likes o' ye, ye big blaggaard av a Dutchman," he returned, and jerking it out my reach he again took aim.

When I saw Murphy beyond my reach and squinting along that rifle barrel, I said to myself,— "Thayendanega's time has surely come," for I knew that at a distance of a hundred yards or under, Murphy could snuff a candle. I lay as if paralyzed, awaiting the crack of the rifle, but to my surprise Murphy did not press the trigger. Instead, he slowly let down the lock and looking at me, scowled.

"Ye losht me me chance, ye fuddlin' fool," he whispered. "He's squatted down atween the others."

I looked, and sure enough, Brant was sitting be-

tween two other Indians, only his headdress showing above.

"Now do ye lay still, and whin ye hear me rifle crack, do ye do for the Cornplanter. I'm sneakin' round for the shot ye 'spiled," and Murphy started to crawl out along the ledge. I reached out after him, caught him by one of his ankles, and yanked him back beside me, much as I might a cat by the tail. He was furious, but I put my hand about the back of his neck and squeezed until his eyes stuck out like those of a snared rabbit. As this punishment very soon caused him to cease struggling, I whispered in his ear: "Now will you behave? If you don't promise me, I'll throw you over my shoulder and carry you straight over to their campfire."

"I'll promise for the now," gasped Tim; "but pfwat the divil ails ye? air ye a Tory?"

"No, I'm not a Tory. I'm as good a Whig as you, but I'll never shoot down an enemy from behind. Not before war is declared, anyway."

Murphy looked at me steadily for a full minute before he spoke again. "An so ye'd let that rid divil go his way, wud ye? Do ye know what ye're doin'? Thim two haythen there beyant air where we kin privint thim doin' murder now, me bye, an' it's our duty to do that same. Do ye know that they're bound for Okwagy and by the same token, that manes divilmint? That high-cocky-lorum av a Brant manes business. He'll take the trail from Okwagy wid from two hundred to five hundred braves an' he an' they'll swape all the frontier wid a besom av disthruccion. The blood o' men, women an' innocint little babes'll flow, 'fore ye've growed a beard on that long jackass jaw o' ye'rn; an' yit ye're

too chicken haarted to plug the rid divil. Faith! an' I think I'd be doin' roight to sthick a knife atween the ribs o' ye an' finish the Brant an' that other bird as soon afther as I cu'd."

"Very well, Tim, if that's the way you feel about it, seize the first opportunity; but so long as I'm able to prevent it, you don't murder this old neighbor of mine in cold blood. I know both Brant and Abeel, or Cornplanter as he is called, and I don't believe they'd harm a hair of your head or mine, if we showed ourselves this instant. It is probably true that they're on their way to receive orders from the Butlers and Sir John Johnson, and then blood—innocent blood—may flow, but until I know they are at such work, I can't stand by and see them murdered."

While this whispered conversation had been going on, I had taken possession of Murphy's gun and I kept it until Brant and his fellows had finished eating and gone on over the hill. Then I handed it back to him. "Now Tim, I'll prove to you how good a Whig I am. I have all my world's goods in those packs upon the hill. I'll take those packs down near the river, hide them there and dog the footsteps of these people. If they succeed in inducing the Okwagas to go on the war path, I'll help spread the alarm. If I can get Skenando to fix me out in my Oneida rig I wore so long before I went trading, I'll even risk my life by going into the Long House at Okwaga and listening to all their plans, while you lurk about in the woods and take care of yourself. I'm no murderer, but neither am I a coward. Are you with me?"

"I am that, me laddy buck. Perhaps ye're roight

afther all, but begorra, if I had me way, I'd kill thim two 'fore they iver rached Okwagy, call it murdher, or pfwhat the divil ye plaze."

The party of Brant and Cornplanter had no sooner got well over the ridge, than we were on our way down the trail toward the river. Murphy made no complaint about his pack now, but struggled manfully along. I let him go ahead, so as to make the pace to suit himself, and with my heavier load he gave me a task to keep up with him. The horse we urged and at nine o'clock or a little later we reached Cook house, a rude cabin on a point of land, where the river circles round. The village of Deposit now stands where this cabin stood for more than forty years.

Back up from the river about five hundred yards was a cabin of logs, built by a half crazy white trapper named Tom Quick. It stood in the midst of a dense thicket, five hundred yards, as I have before said, up a little brook, and in the bed of this we made our way, lest we be tracked by Indians or white men passing along the main trail below. We urged our horse up the stream and into the cabin, where we left him with a three days' supply of feed in reach. The stream ran through one corner of the tumble-down shanty, and he could get plenty of water. Our packs we slung in trees, some distance away from the stream, and feeling sure that our horse was safe from wolves, our packs from bear or men, we ate our dinner and then set out for Okwaga, eighteen miles west, by that devious trail.

Under a pack, I could carry twice Murphy's load and make better time, but on the trail without load, or

even in the woods, he was much the better traveller. In fact, I believe no man, large or small, ever lived, who could outdo him through thick woods. And what a tramp he held me to that hot spring afternoon. We had started at 1:30, or as near to it as we could guess by the sun, and for three hours or more, Murphy never even broke a trot. With my greater height and length of limb I took only two steps to his three, but I was not half so nimble of foot, and when we finally paused beside the trail, where it wound down off Okwaga mountain to the beautiful vale beyond, I was completely blown. Murphy took two or three deep inhalations and was apparently as free of breath as though he had all this time been sitting. As I lay panting like a tired dog, he looked around at me, a roguish twinkle in his black eyes.

“These Dutch pack-horses be no good fer the trail.”

“No, Tim, a little light footed Irish foxhound, hitting the ground here and there, will outleg them.”

“Who’s a hound dog, ye omadhoun?”

“I wish you were, Tim, that you might tell us where Brant and his party are. Do you suppose they’ve reached the village yet? You can’t tell to a minute how old a trail is, by sniffing at it, can you?”

“No, me Dutch fat hid, but I kin tell ye where the Brant, Complanter an’ the bucks be. Do ye see where the stone ridge crops out in the bed of the ould strame, two miles to the right?”

I looked where he indicated and nodded assent.

“Do ye see a thin wave o’ shmoke, jist to the right o’ that, ferninst the patch o’ pine on the rise beyant?”

"Yes, I do; but how came you to see it and how do you know they're off there?"

"They made fer there a mile or two back. I see where they lift the trail. A mile back o' that, two av the slim feets struck earth."

"Runners sent out to call in the braves from Unadilla, Cunahunta and the other villages, Tim."

"Ye're guessing right, me bye. The Brant's no fool. He won't show himself until the braves be assimbled. The Cornplanter probably towld the divil that Kirkland's at Okwagy."

"Yes, but what can Kirkland do? I understand that Brant and the Johnsons have removed him from his mission work, because of his efforts to hold the Oneidas to neutrality. Guy Johnson is yet Indian Commissioner, you know, and I believe that he has sent runners out to all the villages with the information that Kirkland is no longer in authority, and is to be sent back east."

"So he has, but do ye think that Kirkland'll go?"

"No," I replied. "I don't believe he will. I wish I'd asked him about it, when I saw him two days ago at Ingaren." And I grew silent and very thoughtful.

## CHAPTER V

### OWAIMEE

**W**HEN I raised the flap of the tent of Skenando, that April evening, and without a word sat down in my accustomed place at the left of the lodge fire, both he and my Indian sister, his daughter and housekeeper, betrayed more surprise than Indians usually do. Skenando said not a word, however, but signed to Owaimee, and she set before me a wooden trencher of hashed venison, of which I ate heartily, for I was hungry. That task performed with true Indian celerity, I was ready for talk.

“Are there strangers in the villages, my father?”

“None, my son, that we know of, save Captain Butler. Our brother Kirkland took the hill trail for Corn Ground Island and beyond, at the coming of the sun. My son must have seen him go had he not gone with the Little White Runner to the east, even before the sun came. Why has my son returned?”

“And what does Lieutenant Butler, he whom you call Captain, do here?” I asked, evading his question.

“Skenando knows not. The Captain has not visited his lodge. He—hark! I hear his voice. He come now.”

As the bright eyed old Indian sat there erect and



listening, the firelight playing on his strong features and on the beautiful dusky face and glossy hair of my Indian sister as well, I too listened. At first I heard nothing save the sullen moan of the rising wind in the hemlocks on the ridge back of the lodge. Then, I fancied I heard a voice, but was not certain. The ears of the old Indian were keener than mine, however, and a second later he nodded. "Yes! He coming. He leaving the river trail now."

"I would not have him see me here," said I quickly. "Owaimee, hide your tall brother—where he can hear," I added; and with a mischievous smile which showed her white teeth and sparkled in her eyes, the girl pulled to one side some wicker racks on which were a pile of small skins drying before the fire. As she pointed behind them, I caught up my gun, stepped over across and crouched down, whereat she let them back again—not a moment too soon, for at that very instant, Butler threw aside the tent flap and stalked in.

It was the first time I had seen him since the day I ran from home, and so greatly had he changed that I hardly recognized him. The pale, clear complexion which everybody in all the valley had once thought so becoming and high bred, because of the contrast furnished by his cruel, beady eyes and the raven black locks hanging about his temples, was pale and clear no longer, but was now muddy and florid. He was no longer lithe and graceful as he had once been, but had become burly and coarse in build. His attire, although that of a woodsman, was very rich, but it was far from neat. He carried two pistols and a sword, and an aroma of rum radiated from his otherwise highly perfumed person, as after

shaking hands in a ceremonious way with Skenando, he took his seat nearly opposite me and where he could stare at Owaimee. Before his bold gaze, her eyes fell as demurely as might those of a white Puritan maid, and I saw a blush of embarrassment slowly mantle her copper colored cheek, while her slender bronze fingers seemed to drive the shining needle more swiftly than before.

“How our friends, the Oneidas and Mohawks, in the valley?” inquired Skenando, as Butler continued boldly and ardently gazing. This proved to me that Butler’s stare annoyed the usually even-tempered and urbane old chief. I knew this because Skenando had been guilty of a breach of Iroquois etiquette, in addressing his guest first. During the last two years I had seen hundreds of visitors at this and other lodges of Skenando in the various Oneida villages, and never before had I heard this punctilious chief address a visitor first. In fact, the rule of Indian courtesy was to sit silent until the guest spoke. The latter was expected to enter, take the seat always left vacant for guests, and start the conversation. It was therefore clear to me that Skenando was as I have intimated, irritated, although his question was probably the most pacific he could devise.

“The King has few friends along the Mohawk,” returned Butler scowling, “but those he has are warriors and his enemies in that region will be without scalps before many moons.”

Skenando’s eyes glittered a trifle in the firelight, and Butler glancing his way and thinking he had made a hit, went on. “Yes, Chief. We’ll dye the waters of the old river with Whig blood, as soon as

Thayendanega returns. I'm expecting him here soon. He was to meet me here May 1st and it's now April 26th. I thought, however, I'd come on ahead of time. There was a little matter between you and me, Chief, that I wished to fix up. You know me and who I am, Chief?"

"Me know Colonel Butler, your father, your friends the Johnsons, Colonel Claus,—Skenando know all them. Skenando know all the valley."

"Yes? Well Chief, you won't know me there much longer. I'm for the King and I don't give a damn who knows it. I shall probably go on to Canada as soon as I go back. I'm just down from Canada now. Did ye see my Mississagay boys? They're bloodhounds an' no mistake. I may pay some few Whigs my addresses on my way back. The boys'd like to well enough. Things are getting too whiggy in the valley to suit me. When I return there for business, it'll be with several thousand of my friends and we'll sweep the valley of those rebellious hounds that have dared to raise a hand against their sovereign chief. Allow me to make you a gift," and leaning over, he drew from the breast of his coat and held out toward Skenando, a glistening tomahawk of the finest workmanship. The chief gravely grunted, took it and, scarcely glancing at it, laid it on the mat beside him, while Butler went on: "Chief, you have a handsome daughter here. I've often heard of her beauty, but never saw her before. I want a good squaw. Chief Joseph has had two of your tribe and he tells me they are tractable and all right. Will you gimme this girl?"

The suddenness and coarseness of this proposition seemed to startle Skenando, but like the diplomat he

was, he recovered himself and inquired: "You want marry Skenando's daughter?"

"Why—yes, Chief. When I had time, I think I might. However, I won't make any promises that way. You and I'll be together on the war path anyway, and after the war is over we can fix that up most any time. Can the girl be ready to go with me to-morrow? I'll just take her over to my lodge to-night and she can come back over here in the morning and pack up her traps. It may be several days before Brant gets up here. In that case, I shan't go for some time. I must be going back up to the other village now. Come on there you—what's her name, Chief? I swear I forget—"

"Captain Butler—Go! Skenando scorn you. You enter his lodge as a friend. You insult him and his daughter. Take your hatchet and go before Skenando revenge himself. You not know his daughter Christian? What Dominie Kirkland say, when he hear this?"

"Oh, Kirkland? He be —! What's he got to do with me or my affairs? If the hatchet isn't enough, why say the word and mebbe I'll add a gun to the price." As Butler said this, he gathered his feet under him as if to arise, but Skenando, old as he was, was up ahead with a bound. He snatched the tomahawk from the mat as he came up, and with a growl of rage tossed it into the fire. Striding to the lodge flap he flung it aside and standing erect beside it, his tall form quivering with indignation, pointed out of the opening. Butler, realizing his danger, scrambled to his feet and hurried out. Once outside, however, his courage returned, and crouching down so as to look within, he shook his clenched fist

at Skenando and cried: "You Oneida dog! I go now, but I'll call on you some day soon, roast your old shins until they're browner'n they are, and take the girl in spite o' yer teeth." Skenando darted toward him, but the Tory, drunk as he was, knew enough to leap into the thicket and run for his life. Skenando went no farther than the door, but returning, seated himself. Almost at the same instant, a famous Oneida runner, known as Skenando's Hon Yerry and my particular friend, burst in.

"Thayendanega has come!" he exclaimed. "My father, the chief, is wanted at the Long House."

I emerged from my concealment as the young brave sped out upon the trail. "Has my father, the chief, any attendants?" said I.

"None, my son. Skenando must alone speak for his tribe. The old men of the Oneidas are at the lake villages for the spring fishing. The coming of our Tekarihogea was not so soon expected. Skenando must meet him."

"Let me go with you, my father? Give me my Indian dress and let me go? There may be danger at the council." The chief was on the point of refusing, but before he could say me nay, I had darted outside after Owaimee, who, torch in hand, was already hastening to a smaller lodge in which was kept the chief's extra supply of skins and blankets, and in which was the girl's own bed. At two of the villages farther westward, where we spent more time, Skenando had comfortable houses, and he was intending this coming season to erect one near Okwaga. For this reason his braves and their squaws had brought out from the little lake country a considerable quantity of his supplies.

Though not yet fourteen, Owaimee was in every respect a model lodge keeper. Her deftness of hand and orderly arrangement of all our belongings, had never ceased to create wonder within me. She always knew exactly where things were, and the manner in which she now threw out a head dress, deer-skin shirt, leggings, a gaudy colored blanket, and a necklace of bear claws, proved to me that this occasion was no exception to the rule. Sticking up the torch in its place in the main pole of this lodge, and giving my long hair a playful yank, she ran out and left me to don my Indian costume—a costume such as I had worn continuously the first year I lived with Skenando, and on gala occasions since.

In fifteen minutes I was once more to all appearance an Oneida. With my swarthy complexion, black eyes and long, black hair, I knew I looked the character to perfection. Then too, I could talk Oneida as well as any of the tribe, knew all the patois of the other five tribes well enough to understand what was said, and so long as I concealed the whiter skin of my body, where the sun had not recently bronzed it, knew that I would pass. I was taller than the stalwart Skenando by nearly seven inches—he was but six feet one—and as I stalked in to receive the tomahawk Owaimee had produced for me from among Skenando's armament, I noted the admiring gaze of my Indian sister, and somehow wished it had been less worshipful. I would have been glad to have had a word with Murphy before entering the council, but at this time, with runners darting here and there between this collection of Iroquois villages known as Okwaga, dared not give the signal agreed upon. I knew he must be lurking in the shadows

near by, but just where was not certain. I therefore followed Skenando toward the main collection of log, bark and skin houses and lodges where were located the mission buildings and the eastern Long House or council building of the Six Nations. We were within five hundred yards of this house and near the glare of a large fire, which several Indian children had built out near the river, when just as I was passing under a spreading apple tree, of which there were many in the clearings and even in the wooded flats of this region, a voice from above whispered shrilly: "Wrap thot blanket closter ackross the white chist of yez an' toe *in* more, ye Dootch fat hid."

Skenando was not twenty feet ahead, but if he heard he did not heed, and we passed on and into the Long House, where Brant, Cornplanter, Little Aaron, Little Abraham, Antonio, Cat's Eye and some ten or twelve lesser chiefs, as well as two hundred or three hundred braves, were already assembled.

## CHAPTER VI

### AROUND THE COUNCIL FIRE

**T**HE Long House or council chamber of the Iroquois at Okwaga was not so large as two others of the confederacy, but was nevertheless a very spacious building. It was, I should say, about 75 by 150 feet on the ground, and consisted of one vast room with two rows of centre posts or roof supports. It was constructed of logs, poles and bark, and its walls were hung with curiously decorated hides, furs and belts of wampum. At that time, even more than in later years, it was the custom to present a belt of wampum at the end of each speech or important division thereof, and many of these, with proper marks of identification, were hung upon the walls, much as civilized nations hang emblems and reminders of most important political treaties and achievements in their halls of legislation. This particular Long House was very old. It had probably been built fifty years or more, and was made of dry hemlocks. Midway along the centre peak of the roof were several outlets for smoke. The floor of this huge hut was of earth, very smooth, well pressed and swept. A space about 25 by 75 feet in the centre of the house was terraced and raised about two feet higher than the main floor, or at least two feet higher than a space ten feet wide which ran entirely around this dais. Outside this



latter space was another terrace, and a section of floor ten feet wide, running clear around and about two feet higher than the lowest floor. Still outside this was yet another and higher space extending to all four walls. This was, of course, two feet higher than the central dais, and formed a gallery from which spectators to the number of several hundred could look over the heads of those between onto the council in the centre. The council fire, usually two or three feet wide, and from twenty-five to forty feet in length, was built through the middle of this central dais, of short logs of seasoned wood, or of thick dry bark of hemlock, directly under the orifices for the escape of smoke. Along on either side and around this fire, the sachems, chiefs and great men sat in council, while their attendants, usually lesser chiefs, stood or sat on or in the next outer space. The common people and women, when such were admitted, were on the higher ground yet, outside. On certain occasions princesses or queens, such as Miss Molly, Queen Esther, Catharine Montour, and others, were called to the centre and sat close to the council fire.

When Skenando and I entered this hall that evening, a considerable number of the more important chiefs sat tailor fashion about the fire, and these Skenando joined, while I took a seat among the attendants. About two hundred men, women and children were eagerly craning their necks for a better view of the great Tekarihogea, or official head of the Six Nations, known to us of the Mohawk Valley as "Old Nickus Brant's Joseph," to the Indians of the confederacy and outside tribes generally as Thayendanega, and, for years prior to the war,

among his schoolmates and fellow students at Moor's charity school as plain Joseph Brant. A shining light he had long been among this latter class. An individual often mentioned as an example of what Christianity and learning could do for the Indian. Since I can remember, however, I have always held and still hold, that an Indian, like any other wild animal, may be to all appearance civilized, yet when opportunity offers he is still an Indian, a woodsman and a warrior, after the barbarous fashion of his race. Brant was now an exemplification of the truth of this doctrine. He looked like anything but a theological student. Some Indian valet had dressed him for the occasion, and he was in full regalia. His magnificent sword, a present from the British, hung at his side. This, with his glistening tomahawk, his feathers, jewels, gaudy cloth and leather trappings, as well as the paint he had now assumed, conspired to render him a brave spectacle, to Indian eyes at least. At his right sat Walter Butler, in full and brilliant uniform.

As Skenando took one of the places allowed the six chiefs of the allied tribes, Butler scowled at him, but the dignified old chief did not deign him a glance. Cat's Eye, the fiery head chief of the Tuscaroras, the giant of all the Indian gathering—unless I except myself, his superior in weight and stature,—was evidently fired with warlike enthusiasm. His taint of white blood, gained two or three generations back from a paternal grandmother, a South Carolina white woman of Swedish race, showed itself in his lack of self control. Cornplanter, half Scotch as he was, was as stoical as the typical Indian, and, like Brant and Skenando, was a fine type of the Iroquois

chieftain in high council. Then there was Little Peter or Quedar of the Onondagas, Little Aaron of the Okwaga Mohawks, Little Hendrick of the Okwaga Cayugas, Little Abraham, Young and Old Antonio and several other chiefs of lesser note. All sat silent for a space of thirty minutes, and I was truly thankful that Brant and his cabinet were the cynosure of every eye, for I was uneasy.

Suddenly, at a gesture from Brant, several warriors from the outer circle began clearing the room. This done, the door flaps were dropped. Brant now slowly arose, and in monotonous voice began his speech. It was not eloquent. It was not fiery, nor even incendiary. It partook more of the characteristics of an address from the throne. He recited his own powers as Tekarihogea or principal chief of the Six Tribes, spoke of former treaties of these Six Nations with the British, reiterated his argument that the belts of the British were yet lodged with the Iroquois, and formally called the warriors of each and every tribe to the war path in the British interest.

Brant was followed by Cornplanter, who, beginning in a mild deliberate way, warmed up, until in an impassioned address he had fired every warrior with his own apparent desire for war. It was a marvel to me, that this half breed, ignorant and unlettered as I knew him to be, could command such a flood of language, and by his eloquence, enthuse all his hearers in a cause I knew he, himself, had no heart in, and did not deem it wise to aid. It was evident that his superior chief had disciplined him well during the past few hours, and as he finished, there was the heartiest applause that the Iroquois ever grant in council: sonorous grunts of approval

arose from all the room, and I—I grunted with the rest and quite as loudly. It was the safest thing I could do, and I knew it. The stir occasioned by Cornplanter's speech had hardly subsided, when Skenando majestically arose and slowly turning, swept all the assemblage with his glittering eye.

“Brothers! Skenando, Chief of the Oneidas, is but an aged hemlock. The winds of more than seventy winters have left his branches bare. He has beheld the wisdom of our great men for many generations. Proud has he ever been of the triumphs of the Iroquois. With a stronger love than he has ever known for any other chief of our great confederacy, has he loved Thayendanega. His friendship for the white man, his worship of the white man's God, seemed to prove that he was great and wise, and that though young in years, he would yet lead the Iroquois to greater victories than they have ever won—the victories of peace. For peace, brothers, surely hath victories,—bloodless victories. Victories that are not symbolized by the bloody scalp. Victories that leave the hatchet and the knife spotless—without a stain. Brothers! One Great God rules all and loves all. Both white man and Indian. He bows his anguished head when men make war upon men. Even as his Son suffered and died upon the torture tree, so yet suffers the bleeding heart of this Gitchie Manitou for the sins of all mankind. Why is our brother the Great Chief for war? Why is he taking up the tomahawk that shall slay his white brothers? Skenando does not believe that gold has tempted him, yet—”

With a howl of rage the giant Cat's Eye here sprang before the aged chief and raised his hatchet

as if for a blow, while I involuntarily took sight along my rifle barrel at Cat's Eye's throbbing heart, my gun at full cock, my finger on the trigger. Cat's Eye in his guttural Tuscarora was roaring imprecations before the punishment he meant to give. I was resolved that he should never live to strike. Skenando with folded arms, erect head and unflinching eye awaited the stroke and shrank not. It was a thrilling moment.

"Hold!" thundered Brant. "Who dares profane the Long House of the Iroquois, though he be of royal blood, shall die!"

Cat's Eye's arm fell at his side, and he slunk back, his eyes by no means belying his name. My rifle was lowered, and every chief and warrior resumed his seat. No one had noticed my action, and I was thankful for it.

"Let our brother proceed," said Brant steadily, almost with deference. The aged chief with an indescribably graceful gesture of pleading resumed:

"O Great Chief! Tekarihogea! An old man, an aged warrior, a brother Christian has asked you why. It may have been a breach of our ancient law. It may be that Skenando has shown disrespect for his chief, but he did not mean that. He loves his people! his noble chief! this great confederacy. He sees only ruin awaiting all. Even as the wild winter winds sweep the leaves of the forest, so will the war that is to come sweep the Iroquois from their beloved hunting grounds. To-day the wide, deep trail of peace leads from village to village. The richness of field, tree and vine, the game of the forest, the fish of the stream, are ours. We are at peace and we are happy. Why must war come?"

Brant was evidently deeply moved. I could see that, and his voice trembled as he made answer, not to Skenando alone, but to all those dark, stern faces, silhouetted against the flickering fire: "Skenando shall know. It is because Thayendanega is faithful, to his promises to our good father Sir William Johnson, that he will hold faith with the British. He will win blankets, kettles, guns and wampum for his people. He will *command* no man to go upon the war path, least of all our father Skenando, if he does not wish to go, nor will he allow any man to harm his white brother, the Dominie Kirkland; but against the foes of his father, the Great King, he will lead such of his warriors as wish to go, and he will lead them to victory. Thayendanega is not an orator but a warrior. He sees his duty and will do it. His commands are for war. Let the brave—"

"His commands are for wa-r-r-r!" repeated a powerful voice at the main doorway, and every head was turned in that direction, Brant's with the rest. I was looking at him and before I turned, saw him tremble from head to foot. He half drew the sword at his side; then with a mighty effort shoved it back in its scabbard and bracing himself as if to meet a shock, folded his arms, and looked steadily at the disturber. I scrambled to my feet, drew my blanket carefully about me, and stepped upon the terrace behind. My superior height gave me advantage, and I could see over all heads, and into the passage way that the warriors were making as they pressed aside. Straight towards me was striding the most uncanny figure I had ever beheld. Imagine, if you can, a giant of fully seven feet and ponderous pro-

portions, hair and beard of silvery whiteness falling in tangled curly masses quite to his waist—a growth that in the firelight gleamed and glowed like rare old plate. That part of the face not covered by this huge beard was of a peculiar ghastly yellow pallor, and out from underneath the jutting brows glared protruding, lack-lustre, yellow eyes. Clothed in closely fitting deerskin from head to foot, worn with the hair outside, this giant looked as if the hair grew on limbs and body. In his right hand was an eight-foot bow, which he used as a staff as he strode along. I noted three arrow heads projecting from the mass of hair falling over his shoulders as he passed me and—Horrors! what sort of animal was that following after? I fairly climbed over those nearest me to get out of the way, and received a start such as I had rarely if ever before known. As I scrambled in my terror, I looked back. It was a cat—a huge tiger cat, twice as large as any of our panthers and of a bright yellow color. It must have been ten feet from nose to tail tip. It had the panther head, only larger, the same lithe powerful body, and except that it was more stocky in build, was quite similar. As it slunk truculently along at its master's heels, head held low and tail standing out a yard behind, I noted the massive paws and forearms, the muscular cordy shoulders, working under the sleek, short-haired hide, and knew that no man, however strong, could ever stand up under a jump from that thing. "A cougar!" whispered an old Tuscarora warrior near me, and I then remembered that I had heard southern and western travellers tell of the terrible cougar, or American mountain lion. This huge cat looked neither to the right nor

to the left, but blinking in the faint light of the fire which it was approaching, followed close at the heels of its master, even to the raised dais or council platform. Walking straight up to the fire—it seemed as if he would walk into it—the giant produced from under his flowing beard a small stone pipe bowl and a reed stem. Crushing tobacco leaf in his yellow palm, he slowly filled his pipe, knelt monk-like with hands crossed on his breast before Thayendanega for an instant, then arose, picked a live coal from the fire, his eyes closed the while as if the firelight gave them pain, and deliberately put the coal in the pipe. Even under his flowing beard, I could see his broad chest raise as he inhaled a quantity of the smoke, and as slowly fall as he expelled it to the four points of the compass. This smoke had not ceased curling from out of his beard, when from its depths came that powerful baritone, like the voice of a god. His great cat had meanwhile slunk at his feet, and was now stretched at full length on the ground before the fire. With one great naked foot planted on the beast's yellow body, with eyes yet closed, head thrown back and shoulders majestically erect, the giant extended one hand in graceful gesture as he uttered these words in guttural Tuscarora:

“It is our Tekarihogea that has said it. His commands are for war. The fierce winds shriek it in the leafless treetops and whirl it about the desolate crags of the mountains. The southing, sullen, low-sweeping night breeze carries it away to the swamps that lie between. The crow and the buzzard rouse from their roosts in the lonely shadows and flap their wings. The gaunt hungry wolf with gleaming eyes



and glistening fangs, awakes, emerges from his lair, and rejoices at the prospect. The great round moon, placid mother of the night hides her face, and from the bed of the sun, roll up clouds of blackness, while forked lightnings lighten up their path, and rolling thunders herald their coming. Hear them now! At his command, even the elements have come forth to war. Aye! Our Great Chief has spoken. War must come. It finds the Iroquois courted and powerful. It will leave them shattered, hated and weak. Even as my fathers and I fled from the South over the Great Highway of the Blue mountains before the thunder-bows of the whites, so will the Iroquois flee to frozen Canada. Before the Great Spirit had touched my forehead, I sat as a chief among you in the Long House of the Iroquois. Proud was I and grateful, that my father was admitted by your fathers to the Great Confederacy—that all Tuscaroras were Iroquois. Great Chief! Tekarihogea! I bow before your will”—here he knelt again. “I have come to this, your last great council. You shall never hold another so great. I raise not my voice in protest. Even as my son, the Cat’s Eye responds to your call, so would I, but that I am old—very old, and my brain burns when the sun shines. I have come to-night that I might see this, our last great meeting in this Long House of the Iroquois. Great Chief! Tekarihogea! Brothers! Farewell!”

As he finished, the giant strode toward the door, the cougar at his heels, and as he passed out into the night, fierce forked lightning flashed here and there, lighting up all the valley, while the heavy thunders rolled along the ridges. Then the rushing rain

beat upon the roof above us, until no voice could have been heard.

In a short space of time the fierceness of the tempest warned us to seek the open, nearer the river. With my blanket wrapped close about me, I ran before the wind to the base of Okwaga mountain, Skenando close following. There, half way up the steep winding pathway, a single flash showed us the old Tuscarora, hair and beard tossing wildly in the wind. An instant later, the fullest fury of the tempest was about and above us. The rounded bald brow of the low mountain seemed the target for all heaven's blazing batteries, and there, kneeling in the full glare, his face upturned, his arms outstretched as if pleading for mercy, we again beheld the crazy Tuscarora. His huge cat paced hyena-like, back and forth before him, as if to protect him from the onslaught he so feared, and above the heavy beat of the rain and the roll of the thunder, we heard its wail, like the voice of a woman in sorrow, only louder.

In an hour's time, the tempest had passed on up among the hills, and the round spring moon sailed serenely out from behind the ragged trailing clouds, to survey the drooping drenched forest and the flattened storm-swept village. There was at this instant a shock as of an earthquake. The everlasting hills seemed rent asunder, and right across the lowlands at the base of the mountain, and between us and the village, swept the mad river. It had leaped its bounds of many centuries at the upper end of the mountain, and once more sought its old bed. For a time the village would be surrounded and might be swept away. Skenando, securing a canoe,

at great risk crossed and recrossed with Owaimee. Together, we then ascended the mountain, but the father of Cat's Eye was gone. We saw him no more that night.

## CHAPTER VII

### FLIGHT

**A**S we lay there that night on Okwaga mountain in the soft spring moonlight, listening to the rush of the waters below, Skenando told me much of the history of the giant Tuscarora. His name at the south had been Tamalaqua, or son of a blue-eyed squaw. His mother had been a full blood white woman, daughter of a Swedish settler in South Carolina. Sometime prior to the war there, which finally resulted in the expulsion of the Tuscaroras in 1712, the girl, whom tradition said was very beautiful, had fallen in love with the head chief of that tribe, and had left the settlements to become the mother of his son. When the war came on, she had fled northward with the tribe along the great Cumberland plateau, called by the Indians the Great Highway, and was known to have been with them, still a beautiful woman, when the Iroquois admitted them into the Confederacy in 1714. The son of this romantic union grew to manhood, a prince among his people, and about 1730, journeyed with his mother to the south, that she might see her parents before they died. Tamalaqua was at this time unmarried and above twenty years of age. While in the south, as had his father before him, he became enamored of a white girl there and induced her to flee with him and his mother. The trio were over-

taken and the girl was killed by Tamalaqua, to prevent her from falling into the hands of the whites. He and his mother escaped, although Tamalaqua at the time received an axe wound which finally resulted in his madness. On his return north, however, he married a woman of his people and became a father. The periods of his madness waxed more frequent as he grew older, and at the close of the French and Indian war, when young Cat's Eye returned, it was to find his father missing and himself a king of his tribe. Tamalaqua had wandered away, and although he was occasionally heard of, he had never been seen by any member of the Six Nations until now. Word had often been brought in by some delegate or runner from some conference with the tribes about the Chattanooga region, that Tamalaqua had been seen and that traces of him had been found. Sometimes he was heard of in the far west, but more frequently in the mountainous region where the famous Dragging Canoe held sway. It was reported that he travelled only in the night, to avoid the glare of the sun which drove him frantic; that he hunted only with a bow; was followed by a great dog of some unheard of species and lived on roots, berries and raw deer meat. The mystery surrounding him, had rendered him an object of dread to all Indians in that vast territory over which he roamed, and whenever traces of him were found in the forest, Indian hunters left that region until he departed. His trail, and one supposedly that of his dog, had only to be seen, to cause a hunting or war party, however strong, to pull up stakes and leave. He was reported to sleep in caves by day and to travel and hunt by night. It was claimed that he was

possessed of that peculiar characteristic of the cat—nocturnal sight—and could thread the most intricate passages of the darkest caves without torch or flambeau, while in the daylight, he was nearly blind. During the two years I had lived among the Indians, I had often heard his name mentioned, but always supposed the reference to be to some spirit and not to a being of flesh and blood. In fact, I had often heard mothers quiet their fretful children by telling them that unless they ceased wailing, Tamalacqua would get them.

While Skenando had been telling me this story, the storm had been raging off to the north and east, and the river seemed steadily rising, but as the night advanced, the waters receded somewhat, and when I awoke at early dawn, it was to find a comparatively dry path across the former bed of the stream, to the lowlands opposite the village. A portion of the village had been swept away as we could see, but the Long House, the mission building and at least fifty huts of logs and bark were undamaged. Few among the three hundred or more who had sought refuge on the mountain were yet awake. Most of them had slept only when it became apparent that the flood was subsiding, and would sleep late. Skenando, Owaimée and I crossed the new river in a canoe we had used, to find the lodges of my Indian father blown flat. We soon put them up again, and by a new lodge fire cooked our morning meal.

I was sitting with my back to the door, when the flap was thrown aside and in walked Walter Butler. Luckily I was still in my Indian dress. He did not notice me, but scowled at Skenando.

“Chief, big a fool as you made of yourself last night, both here and in the Long House, I’ll give you one more chance. I don’t want to hurt you if I can help it. Send that girl to my camp up next the mission building within a half hour, and this big hulking warrior of yours, to join our forces, and you may go your way. Refuse, and I’ll come and take the girl and the buck, warm your old hide for you, and see to it that you never see your daughter again. You needn’t try to go for help to any of your other bucks down at Ingaren either. I know where they’re encamped, and I’ll have a Seneca runner started down there within a half an hour, with orders from Thayendanega, to have them come in and join our party. If they refuse, I’ll send another party down there to wipe ’em out. Look alive now and get this buck and that girl up there, or you’ll hear from me in a way you won’t want to,” and he turned and strutted away, his sword clanking on the rocks beside the trail.

For an instant after Butler’s departure, I breathed freer and was thankful that he had not stepped farther within the lodge and looked at my face while talking, for surely my pallor must have betrayed me. Now, however, new fear came upon me. Once in his party I would be detected, for no white man, no matter how well disguised, could travel long in a war party and conceal from his companions his nationality. Besides, the Indians farther west, Oneidas especially, knew me as a brother. It was truly an alarming situation, and I looked apprehensively at Skenanda

“We must flee,” said the iron nerved old man steadily. “I to my braves that I may lead them out

of danger, you and Owaimee to hiding, until we can come to you."

"All right my father," said I as cheerfully as I could. "Meet us at the Cook House to-morrow night at the latest. The signal shall be the cry of the tree toad, thrice repeated."

He gravely nodded, caught up a blanket, some venison, a bag of parched corn and his rifle, and in a half bent posture fled down the trail to the corn ground of the Okwaga Senecas. Here he struck into the woods, to make the short cut across the bend of the river. I knew that by this route he could save a half hour at the least, and would probably reach his braves near the village of Ingaren, twelve miles southwest, before any party starting out from Okwaga, could make half the distance. Meanwhile, Owaimee had wrapped two more blankets about some provisions and extra moccasins for each of us, and with the pack on her back, stood ready for flight.

"Give me that pack my sister. If you follow close, that will be labor enough for you. Now come," and I darted along the high bank of the river and took to the bed of the little brook than ran in from the southwestern hills over opposite the mountain. I longed to make across the other corn field, through the orchard back of the village, and so on to the mountain trail, but I was fearful of being tracked, for I knew the soft ground would surely show our footprints, while the brook and its stony bed would not. Back where the stream comes down the first rise of the hill is a little waterfall, and from the top of the ledge causing this is a fairly comprehensive view of all the beautiful valley. Panting, we paused here and beheld Butler coming out of the



lodge we had so lately quitted. It was less than a mile away, and we could see him plainly as he stood looking up and down the river. Then he started on a run to enter a cabin some distance north, and out of this speedily emerged with four Indians at his heels. We could see their heads and shoulders above the bushes as they ran toward the lodge again. Here Butler stood, while the four, one hundred yards or less apart, ran in a circle around the lodge that they might catch our trail. Soon one of them gave a triumphant yell, which the wind faintly bore to us up the bed of the little creek.

“They Mississague braves, come down from Canada with Captain Butler. Follow trail heap fast,” remarked Owaimie in her matter of fact way.

“So Butler brought some of those bloodhounds down, did he? Well! They’ve found some trace or other up that creek. Come on my sister, we must fly or fight,” and I darted out onto the side hill, she at my heels. I knew that in the open, or in the woods for that matter, with a knowledge of the direction we had taken, these noted scouts could run us down in two hours or less, for our speed was not nearly equal to what I could have made if alone, and I hoped to gain some time by misleading them, which I could do, if they did not discover where we had left the creek, for they would naturally think that we had kept up its course to the height above. I made as few traces as possible and warned Owaimie on that score.

We had made a good mile alongside the hill, when we came to another creek running parallel to the one up which we had come, except that it swerved a trifle to the east and entered the river at

the upper end of the mountain. We ran down the bed of this creek, jumping from stone to stone, sometimes wading in the water. Along the river was a fringe of high brush, but for some distance before reaching this, the creek ran through an open treeless swamp, now a shallow lake. At the head of this swamp was a windfall which would delay us greatly. We must skirt the swamp and keeping cover as much as possible, get to the river and across. Water was a trackless path—the only path these Mississague braves could not pick our trail on. At the edge of the swamp, I paused and listened. Back up the creek, less than a mile away, sounded another yell. They had discovered where we had entered the water. I looked toward the village a mile below and saw another party start out from there toward the river. They were running diagonally up stream, and would head us off. Hiding was of no use now. “Come on Owaimee!” I shouted, dashing through the shallow water and across the open. Another startling yell, up the creek right behind us, lent speed to the feet of the terrified girl. She kept well with me. As I ran I thought hard. If only the river had not changed its course and we were on the other side of the mountain as yesterday, those two creeks meeting in one at the mountain’s base, were a slight barrier to the safer heights above. Once on the brow of the mountain, safely intrenched, I could keep at bay half or all the village. Yes, if I could make the mountain top I knew a place of defense, but to breast that rushing current, was to be swept down at least two hundred yards, and before we could reach the other shore, I knew that the pursuers from the village below

would be abreast of us and shooting across the stream to kill. I burst through the brush to the edge of the rolling, muddy river, Owaimee not five yards behind. She had run well, brave girl, but I could see that she was weakening. I looked up and down along the branch-strewn shore; a freshly made shore, wet and slimy, for the river had fallen several feet since the night before. It was yet very swift and high, however, and it must be a strong swimmer that crossed it. The yells of our pursuers up back over the route we had come, were growing frightfully near, and were answered by other fierce yells from around behind the curving shore below. The agony of that moment! Nothing but brush on the one hand, not even a tree for shelter. On the other, roily, deep, swift rolling water. No escape seemed possible.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CAPTURE

**A**S I stood irresolute at the edge of the river, a stone whizzed by my head and struck with a splash not far from me. I looked in the direction from which it had come. Some distance out into the stream, or what was now the stream, had stood a huge hollow pine. The storm of the night before had blown it down, and its top-most branches laid well in shore, while its great trunk extended out to the stump from which it had fallen. It had not at any time been submerged, and the water had not been high enough to run over the top of the stump and fill it. In this hollow stood Murphy, only his head and shoulders showing! He was beckoning to us, and we lost little time in running out over the log to him. We all three crowded in together and settled down out of sight from shore, although through the standing splinters left from the breaking off, we could see quite well.

“Take off that rig on yere hid, ye Dutch fool!” was Murphy’s first salutation, as I settled down beside him. “Thim feathers’d surely show,” he added.

I carefully removed it, just as Walter Butler and a half dozen of his Mississagues came around the bend of the river below. They were running at full speed, and looking out across the river. Owamee

and I had come through the shallow water from the place where Murphy had called to us, so we did not fear any discovery of our trail. They ran up the river right past our retreat. In our fright, before taking to the water, we had run up the river bank some distance in the soft muck, leaving a broad trail, and as the keen eyes of the Mississagues detected this, the entire crowd yelled exultantly. This yell was answered by another but a few rods back from the river, and soon out through the brush on the scant trail we had made, came our four pursuers. There was much excited gabble and not a little pointing up the river, after which all of the party save one, set off in that direction. Fortunately, at the very spot where we had taken to the water, there was a fresh hard gravel beach, yet wet and glistening and stretching at best a mile up the river and around out of sight beyond the mountain. No track could be seen, even if we had gone that way. The fierce braves skurried up along this like deer hounds, keeping a sharp lookout along the brush to assure themselves that we had not taken to the woods again. Butler followed more leisurely, and the Indian left behind sat down in the sun on the very log over which we had come for shelter. He sat back toward us, and the ripple and gurgle of the water among the gnarled limbs, as well as the noise it made in dashing over a smaller log that had become jammed in above this big one, shut out all other sound in his vicinity. The Indians above had run at least half the stretch of the gravel beach, and we knew that soon they would be returning for closer search, especially as they would expect to find a trail on the softer ground above, or some trace or sight of

us. We must take advantage of their distance from us, and that soon, or be later caught like rats in a trap. It was by the merest chance that they had neglected our stump, and on their return, they were almost certain to peer into it. We felt that we must remove that Indian from our path, or swim. There was no other way.

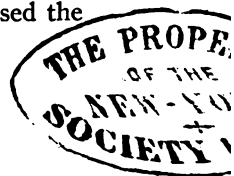
We debated hastily and decided that we must not shoot under any consideration. An impulse seized me, and I commenced crawling out over the stump. As I went, I whispered to Murphy: "Hold yourself in readiness." I drew my knife and crept softly toward my intended victim, who, all unconscious of his danger, sat half asleep in the morning sunshine. As I neared him, it seemed as if he must turn, and I could hardly restrain myself from leaping. A murderous feeling was upon me. I longed to plunge my knife into his back. I had never thirsted for blood before, and I found myself wondering at my ferocity. He was not a large man, but lithe and sinewy, and I felt sure would give me a hard fight, unless taken by surprise; and then too, he was quite sure to yell. I was not afraid of casting a shadow that he might see, for both he and I were facing the sun. I was at last within reach of him, and then somehow, I know not how, had him by the throat with my left hand, while my knife point pricked the naked flesh of his back. One look at his fiendishly painted face, one glance at the knife he had snatched and was raising to slash my left wrist, and any scruples I might have had vanished. It was his life or mine. He was dead before I released him.

My companions now ran out along the log, and, keeping within the edge of the water, we three ran

down the river, bending low, that we might not be seen above the log. A second thought came to me, and telling my companions to hasten ahead, I ran back, caught up the body of the Mississague and threw it as far out into the water as I could. As I sprang down off the log, a faint yell came from far up the river, and Butler turned to look back. I had been seen. I turned and making a speaking trumpet of my hands shouted after Murphy: "Run Tim! Down across the point behind the brush! Run for your lives! I'm seen! Make for the curve just this side of the old point! There's a canoe there, on the high ground near the old cabin! I'll follow after I've checked these fellows! Be launching it!"

Owaimee stopped at the sound of my voice, and turning, stretched her hands out toward me. Even at that distance I noted the pleading look on her face. The poor child was fearful that her brother was subjecting himself to too great danger. I waved her angrily ahead, and, sobbing as if her heart would break, she obediently turned and ran on after Murphy. Then I secured the rifle of the dead Indian, which I had before forgotten, saw that it was loaded and a good one, and sprang over the log as if to take flight. Once out of sight I crouched down, crawled back to the log and awaited the foe. How they did come! Those Mississagues ran like deer, and howled like wolves. They overtook Butler, and, to my great regret passed him, for I wanted a crack at him. I waited until they were within one hundred and fifty yards and well out from the brush, when I fired my own double barrel twice in rapid succession, and the Indian's gun as close after as I could. Three of the nine Missis-

sagues went down and a fourth limped behind his fellows, who turned and rushed for cover. Butler, too, broke for the brush. In my excitement I laughed fiercely. My first day of murder was a lucky one for me as yet, and I patted the breech of the old double barrel which Miss Molly had given me two years before. Never before had I appreciated that gun as now. I reloaded it, and finding that the Indian's gun was the same bore as mine, loaded that too. Then I looked toward the three Indians lying there. One poor wretch had dragged himself part way to cover, given up, rolled over and lay as if dead. I raised up a trifle that I might see better. Something jarred me. I felt numb all over. Then came a curl of smoke and a report from the brush above. The truth came to me—I was hit. Heavens! was this faintness, this numbness, death? I looked at my left side. There, near where my heart ought to be, blood was gushing out—my own blood. It was dyeing the buckskin shirt Skenando had put upon me. I shoved my finger through the hole and felt another rent in my own flesh. With the instinct of a wounded bear, I reached for some dead grass that had eddied round behind the tree, made a wad of it, rolled it in the pine pitch that had exuded from a broken knot, and stuffed it into my wound. Gritting my teeth, I made another and stuffed it into the larger rent where the ball had come out, and fancied that the blood did not flow as freely. But I was faint and dizzy. One of my quarry on the beach stirred. I tried to take aim at him, when a feathered head showed itself in the brush back of him. I rubbed the blur from my eyes, changed my aim, drew down below the feathers and pressed the





trigger. It seemed as if the gun had hardly cracked, when the wearer of the feathers came up at full length out the brush and sprawled in the death agony on the wet gravel. The jar of the gun, however—it was the Indian's gun—had seemed to tear something loose inside me. I felt as if I was fainting, or about to. I left the single barrel leaning against the log, but took my own, and staggered blindly out into deeper water, that I might swim down the river. They should never have my scalp. But how icy cold the water was. My gun seemed dragging me down. Once I went completely under. I held my breath until I came up; the tearing inside was frightful. But had I come up? I was breathing air—was I? Where was the sky that had shone so blue above as I went under? Just then the back of my head struck gravel. It must be that I was at the river's bottom and was drowning. I had always heard that drowning was a pleasant death. Now I was sure of it. How I would have liked to have said good-bye to Tim and Owaimée. I hoped they would escape. Then I wondered what the next world would be like and how long it would take to reach it, and then I knew no more. . . . When I regained consciousness again, it was to hear a voice above me, but seemingly far away, cursing wickedly. *This* surely was not *heaven*—it must—Then a quantity of dirt came rattling down into my face and eyes.

“There's the track of two women down along below this drift Crow. Must have been two women in that party. But where is that fellow you winged? I saw him jump when you hit him. Big buck he was,—one of the biggest I ever saw. I think he

was the big warrior that was squatted in Skenando's lodge this morning. Couldn't have been Skenando, although he might have been along too. I thought at first there were three men behind that log. How he did put in the shots. But where he's gone to, is a mystery."

"Him hide like wild duck in Ontario marsh," answered a Mississague voice. Then it flashed upon me that I was not dead, at all, but lying under a drift of brush at the edge of the water, and that Butler and his gang were above me. But where were Murphy and Owamee? Again Butler's voice broke in on the gurgling murmur of the water:

"There they go! Right across the river this side of the old channel. How'd they get across and we not see 'em? They're behind that tall grass right below the lower point of the mountain, between the old and the new river. See 'm? By Jove! There's a low place in that grass! They're going right across it! Let me take your gun, Crow, and ketch 'em as they come out. Good three hundred yards. It's luck and chance if I hit." Just then the rifle cracked. "Made a hit! By Jove, I did! Woman too! What's the man going to do? It is a man, ain't it? By Jove! He's shooting! Crow let's get out o' this! Crow! Crow! . . . Well, I'll be cussed if he hasn't got it!" and Butler sprang down off the brush just as a heavy body came rolling over it and laid kicking and struggling right over my head. Something wet and warm was dripping down into my face. Then I fainted again. It seemed a day before I came back to earth.

"Yes, I admit, Chief, it was a fool caper, chasing that buck and squaw, but you and I can't afford to

quarrel over it. It's my men that were killed. Not yours. Here come the Mississagues. You'll hear a howl now. They don't know that their Chief Crow is dead. One missing—we found his gun—three shot, a fourth wounded and now Crow. Pretty tough medicine, by gad! Potted him right through the centre, breaking his back. Here boys! Come and get this body!"

At this instant I was started out of the lethargy in which I had been lying by a frightful yell, right above me; and into the brush heap came several heavy bodies, pressing the cruel thorns and sharp sticks down into my face and head. They were smothering me too. I was drowning. Involuntarily, I struggled and moaned. There were more yells and the sunlight was let in, as eager hands dragged the covering aside. Then I was roughly dragged forth.

"A white man!" yelled Butler, "and in Oneida dress! Blood from head to foot! I knew Crow hit him! Handle him easy, boys! Save him for a hatchet play and a roast at the stake. Yes! He's got life enough! Curse him! We'll cook him to a finish!"

## CHAPTER IX

### A FRIEND IN NEED

**I** MUST confess, that I was about ready to give up all hope when I was dragged out of that drift by those exulting fiendish Mississagues; and knowing what I might expect, I would at that instant have welcomed a finishing blow from a hatchet. I set my teeth hard, however, that the rough handling might not force another groan from me, but it seemed as if hot irons were searing my heart and lungs. The pain was so great that I was sinking into faintness again, when Brant bent over me.

“What your name young man?”

“I’m Peter Diehl, Captain.”

“What! You boy run away from valley?”

“Yes sir. Mr. Butler knew me. I ran away because I wasn’t guilty. Miss Molly helped me. Didn’t she tell you?”

Brant made no reply to my question but turning to Butler said: “Lieutenant! You no ’member this boy? He ole Diehl’s Little Quedar.”

“So he’s the chap is he? Well! I always knew he’d get his come uppance. Gad! But he’s grown some. Take a high fire to warm him. Think you’ll be able to dance in a fire to Mississague music? Eh! Little Peter?”

I made no reply to this but shut my eyes, to open them again as Brant bent over me.

“Where you been all these years? My sister often wonder.”

Somehow there seemed a kindly interest in this question, and something told me that I could expect far more mercy from this Indian, than from his white associate. I felt that I must tell him something of myself.

“I fled to the Oneida country, Captain. I’ve lived there in Skenando’s lodge most of the time for nearly two years. I was trying to defend him and my sister. Mr. Butler was trying to get her. He wanted Skenando to give her to him. She’s a good girl—one of Mr. Kirkland’s best.”

“Yeeah! me understand,” said the chief and at his words, his face which had seemed floating away, came nearer. “You make fight from log?”

I nodded as best I could and was about to speak, when Butler broke in.

“Stand aside, Chief! We’ve no more time for palaver here. These boys want to hurry this fellow down to the village and have a roast before we start out. He’s theirs all right enough. They’ve earned him.”

These words again aroused me, and my clouded vision cleared. I saw Brant straighten up and a peculiar Mohawk signal came from his lips and teeth. He was outwardly calm, but his voice trembled with indignation as he turned to Butler. “Lieutenant. What for you roast this white boy? He only fight for him sister. He brave man. He your old neighbor. He no fight the king.”

“Oh hell, Chief! you’re a fool! He was a whig

before he was eighteen and you know it. He's a whig now, or will be if he lives. He's been hanging around with that old Skenando for days. He's killed four or five of my bucks and by heaven, he's going to roast for it."

"And I say he *not* roast!" Brant's fury had flashed forth in a white heat. "You the man who should roast! You lead these men to their death! You no wait for orders! No! you not ask me for girl! No! you think you head man! Thayendanega show you who is captain! Call off you Mississague squaw chasers, and get into camp, or he order you all bound! Who was it you shoot in that boat? me see you!"

"None of your damn business," growled Butler. At this instant Little Aaron of the Unadilla Mohawk tribe came running up, followed by several of his braves.

"Who shoot Owaimee and her brother, the white son of Skenando?" demanded Little Aaron.

"Mr. Butler did it, Chief," I whispered faintly as Little Aaron bent over me. Brant in reply to an inquiring look from the new comer nodded vigorously and frowned fiercely. Little Aaron straightened up, and his eyes flashed as he laid his hand on his hatchet in a threatening manner. Butler was no coward if he was a fiend. He pulled his sword with a flourish and faced the two.

"What if I did?" he shouted. "What are you two going to do about it? I wanted the girl, if you must know, the same as Sir William wanted your sister, Mr. Joseph Brant. The same as that Scotch trader, Old John Abeel, got the Seneca girl who became the mother of your Cornplanter. The same

as Max Purbeel has your daughter, Little Aaron."

"My daughter married," grunted Aaron.

"My sister Mrs. Lady Johnson and Sir William make all her children him heirs," chimed in Brant proudly. "He tell me to look after you young hot heads 'fore he die an' I do it too. You no burn this boy. My sister kill you if you do. Skenando yet kill you for shooting his girl Owaimee. You too smart. You go back Okwaga and get ready march or we put prisoner strings on you. No more back talk to me! You go!" and he pointed to the village.

Butler was white with anger. He muttered and cursed at his four braves, but he followed them as they bore the body of Crow to a thicket and covered it first with brush and then with stones. The arms of the three dead up along the bank were then stripped from them, for such is the savage custom of this tribe with common braves, and the nude bodies were cast into the river.

As the Mohawks reached the village with me, the body of Owaimee was brought up from a point below, where it had lodged, and several of the girls of the Indian class which Mr. Kirkland had made up from the various tribes having villages in and near Okwaga, prepared it for burial. These girls made faces at Butler and talked excitedly about the affair when he was at a distance, and when he was near made great ado of mourning over the body. All this I could see from the open door of the lodge, where the Mohawks had laid me. Butler stood defiantly about for a time, but finally calling his braves, gave orders for packing, and as soon as they were ready went down the river to the cross trail leading over

the hills to Corn Ground Island at the mouth of the Chenango. He departed without a word of farewell to any one in the village, and was evidently in a great rage.

Meanwhile, by an order from Thayendanega, I had been stripped, washed in warm water and given stimulants. Then a young Seneca, who spoke imperfect English, but knew something of surgery, was brought in by Brant and the two, assisted by several squaws, examined my wound carefully. The Seneca told me that I had saved my strength by stuffing in the pitch and stopping the bleeding, but he nevertheless took out the grass, and put in place a mass of pounded roots, mixed with pitch. All this done, I was carried on a litter to the lodge Skenando had left, and there stripped and bathed again with a tea of Arnica or Indian tobacco, while a dose of the vile stuff was put down me. It was a strong stimulant, however, and I rallied greatly and grew warmer.

The girls soon brought the body of Owaimee to the lodge adjoining, and laid it on the couch which she had that morning quitted. Then all squatted around and within the two lodges, and began crooning as they had so often seen their elders do. The older girls as well as the squaws, were busied in preparing their brothers and husbands for the journey westward. Braves were coming in from all directions, and about the hour of eleven the band set out, four hundred and fifty strong, or near it. Before leaving, Brant came in to see me.

"Orders left to let Quedar go his way, when he well enough," he said, as he stood looking down at me. I knew that I was under great obligations to



him, but what to say was beyond me, so I said nothing at all. He walked to the door and went out. Then he returned. "Quedar do as he please, but if he care to join king's forces, Thayendanega help him get good service. Thayendanega Captain Brant now. Colonel byemby, mebbe. Me s'perior to that Walter Butler. Him drunk most all time."

"Well, Chief!" said I finally, "I can't talk much now, but I'm almighty thankful to you and I'll think about the service. But I don't know what I will do. I shall lie here until I get well, if I ever do, but just what I'll do then, I don't know. At all events, you have not lost anything by helping me and I may do you a service yet. I will if I can, you may depend. When you see Mrs. Johnson—Miss Molly I mean, tell her that the Dutch boy thinks of her often, and always with gratitude. She's a good woman."

All this I was some time in saying for I was very weak, but Brant listened patiently, shook my hand as I stopped my talk from sheer weariness, and once more inviting me to join his forces, left the lodge and soon after the village.

After the war party had left Okwaga and the other villages up and down the rivers of that vicinity, all of which were generally included under that name, there was peace and quietness, and the beautiful vale became once more an Iroquois Eden. What those left behind were thinking of, I know not, but from their actions, they seemed to believe that they would never be molested. The squaws, old men and children went about the spring planting and pruning. The spring run of shad was cared for. One of the Indian girls, farther advanced than her

sisters, opened up the school, which since the commencement of hostilities had been abandoned, and the girls and younger boys played at going to school, even though they may not have learned much.

The first few days, I fretted much about Murphy. I was quite certain that the Indians had neither caught nor killed him, and that beautiful spring morning when the squaws and children carried me out, that I might see Owaimee laid in her shallow grave on a knoll in the Indian burying ground, I looked for him in all directions, half expecting to see him come out from the forest. But he did not appear.

That afternoon owing, perhaps, to my sadness and weariness, I slept better than before since my hurt, and through the night my sleep was equally sound. The fifth day, I was able to move about a bit and crawl down to the river. It was warm anywhere in the sun, and much warmer in the sand bed opposite the lower point of the mountain. A hundred or more Indian children ran races, and played along the river bank. Their mothers toiled in the field over back of the low fringe of willows. Their grandmothers sunned themselves near me, and laughed and chatted with the children and one another; for the Iroquois in peace is not the morose spiteful beast most people consider him. There was the singing of birds, the hum of bees, the ripple of the water, the mingled voices of women and children. For a time I distinguished one sound from another; then there was a blending—a drowsy hum, and I slept.

Presently I was awakened by a cry of "The Dominie! Mr. Kirkland! Chief Skenando!" and

opening my eyes found the two standing near me. "Where your sister Owaimée?" Skenando was saying; and I wept for the first time in years as I grasped his outstretched hand and told him.

Excited women and children gathered about us, as the presence of the new comers became known, and everybody at once attempted to tell of the recent tragedy. I was too agitated to talk, but Skenando waved them all away, helped Mr. Kirkland to carry me to the lodge, and then having arranged me comfortably on my couch, stood back and looked at me as if expecting information. I have never told a sadder story than that first border tragedy of the revolution. I have never seen a father's heart wrung more cruelly than was that of Skenando, but he made no sign nor sound. Profound sorrow, however, finally gave way to fierce rage. "What is Skenando's duty now?" he demanded, abruptly turning to Mr. Kirkland, who with a look of horror on his expressive face, had listened silently to all I had to tell. The Dominie shook his head as if words failed him and walked out the tent.

"Did you find your men, my father?" said I.

"Yes. Skenando has been to the lake village. He brought the Dominie with him that he might talk peace to the men of these villages, but we are too late. All have gone. War is not a time for such talk. Skenando hoped to remain neutral, but he is driven to the war path. His daughter's spirit calls for vengeance. He will never rest until he has the scalp of Bloody Butler. If such men are sent out by our father the king, Skenando is with those that are called rebels. Skenando is a rebel and he now mourns that he did not at first lead his braves to

the Whig councils. His brother Kirkland may plead, but he too would do better to take sides. Skenando sees but one right side. Where is the young brave who was with Quedar the day he journeyed to the Delaware?"

"Murphy, you mean my father? I know not. I never saw him after I bade him run to the boat. That he reached the mountain I know from the conversation I heard. As soon as I am able, I shall start for the Delaware and try and hunt him up. I would like to take the war path with you, but for the fact that I shall be but poor help for half the summer. I had as you know a large pack of skins and a horse. I should get them out if I can before this war spreads farther eastward, shutting me out from the Philadelphia market and before I lose them, if not my life. I shall, as soon as I am able, set out to kill Butler, if you have not already done that work. It must be done by some one."

"Skenando will do that," said the chief solemnly; and he strode out the lodge in the direction of the newly-made grave, just as Mr. Kirkland entered.

"Well, Peter! this is bad business," said he gravely, as he came and sat near me, "what are you going to do now?"

"Why, Mr. Kirkland," answered I, "If I could get my packs to Albany, I'd go over there, sell them and offer myself as a soldier, but as it is, I'm going to an easier market, and I'm going to volunteer for the service there as soon as I'm well enough—I haven't finished with Butler, yet. I'm not sorry that I checked Murphy when he wanted to kill Brant, but knowing what I do now, if

it were Butler in Brant's place, I'd pat Murphy on the back."

"My lad, you are excited."

"Mr. Kirkland, it would be better for you and your people if you were more of my way of thinking."

"I'm a man of God. I can't contemplate bloodshed."

"Oh, nonsense, Mr. Kirkland. This man Walter Butler would give you over to the torture tree as nonchalantly as he'd take a drink. He's the coldest blooded villain I ever heard of, and he has bravery to back up his malice. He'd brain a baby as quick as any murdering Mississague, and he'll face a regiment of regulars, if he needs to, to carry his point. I only hope Murphy is following him."

"Faith! an' I was me bye, but the divil gimme the shlip. I got a pair of Mississagy schalps, though," and the grinning, exultant little Irishman stepped inside the lodge and dangled his bloody trophies before our eyes. Mr. Kirkland started back horrified.

"White men taking scalps!" he ejaculated.

"Yis, yer riverence; an' murdherin school gurls, too. Yere sons o' gintlemin air doin' that lasht, yer riverence."

"Murphy, you've been eavesdropping!" said I sternly.

"Yis. An' I dropped a brace o' Mississagys too, me Dutch fat hid. An' ye—if ye hadn't sthopped to tear the schalps offen thim ye kilt—four o' thim at that, ye wuddent be lyin here hurted, so ye wudent."

"Tim! you know you lie about that."

"Indade, yer riverence!" exclaimed Murphy, turning from me to appeal to Mr. Kirkland, while mischief glittered in his black eyes, "didn't I see him, a hand on aither shoolder an tarin' the schalp lock off wid his tathe."

"You're surely mistaken, Tim," said Mr. Kirkland, a horrified look on his face. "Peter never did that."

"He didn't, ye say, sor? Well! It's not me'll be dishputin' yere riverence. No, sir! Not wid the likes o' ye, sor, but begorra, he murdhered more'n me, sor. He's a divil, sor, whin his Dootch is up." As Mr. Kirkland here turned and fled from the lodge, Tim came over and sat down beside my bed. "Bless yer Dootch face! But I'm sorry for ye," he whispered, while a tear glistened on his cheek. "Ye're not such a bad felly fer a Dootchman," he continued. "Come wid me? I'll take ye down troo the Pinsylvanny woods an' let me mother nurse ye up."

"Never mind me, Tim. Where have you been? Tell me about it."

"Well! ye see jist afther ye did that quick shootin', I left the gurl an' ran along up the bank to see if I cud be av anny assishtance to yez. Jist as I parted the brush, the bullet tuk ye. I see ye jump an' fancied I heerd ye grunt, clane down there where I wuz. Thin ye comminced actin' quarely an' says I to mesilf, he's done fer. Thin ye tuk to the wather, tried to swim an' cudn't. Says I to mesilf, it's me an' the gurl agin the crowd. I run back, jumped into the canoe an' shoved off. We'd a made the mountain all roight an' escaped, do ye mind, fer none but the Mississagys was afther us, hadn't it

been fer the divil's eye av that son av a rattle snake Butler. He borried the Injun's gun. I see him take it, an' I made Owaimee lay down. He aimed at me, I'm sure, an' missed me, fer I was paddlin'. 'Twas a chance shot. The ball cut troo the canoe right behind me an' tuk her troo the back o' the nick. She jist riz do ye mind, got partly onto her fate, an' widout so much as a moan, wint overboard. I paddled back round her as she kim up, but she was deader'n the foorst king av Ireland. Thin I looked out fer Murphy, takin' a quick shot that got the buck. From me hidin' place I see ye carried in. I was right achrost the strame. Thin's whin I ought to killed Butler, but I didn't. Whin he started out wid his eshcort I was puzzled. Says I to mesilf, says I, I can't do me Dootch frind anny good. I may git Butler, and an hour behind I started aafter. Talk about goin'! Thim divils on'y touched the high places. I overtook 'em camped on Corn Ground Island, at the mouth av the Chinangy, sixteen miles west, at a little pasht midday. I was hopin' they'd lay down a bit, but they didn't. That night they stayed at the Chugnutt (Chocanut) village, ten miles west an' me outside. The nixt day was fine an' I follyed close as I dared, but at noon they met three more o' the Mississagys at Owegy, and trotted on. I sneaked close, near night, and heerd Butler tellin' the three to go north to the fut o' the lake an' mate him there nixt mornin'. Thin I knowed he was a goin' down to see the Quane (Queen Esther). I follyed a matther o' five mile, whin me chance was good. Two o' the bucks was behind, an' two av thim ahid o' Butler, an' all was a goin' single file up a stheep trail on the opposite side o' a creek that

cuts into the Susquehanny. I drops behind a log, takes good aim at Butler's shoolders, an' pulled. 'Twas a matther o' two hundred yards, but Murphy kin hit a dollar that dishtance. It do seem loike the divil perfects his own, fer jist thin, what shud happen but a sthone wint rollin' down the trail an' Butler whirled. The ball cut the backbone o' the buck ahid, an' he clutchin' at the man afore him, wint backward, knockin' 'em all indways. I fired agin at Butler as he tumbled an' faith I hit another buck instid. Ye ought a seen 'em scather. 'Fore I cud load and folly, they was down the ravine inter the river, an' runnin' like the hounds they air. I got me trophies, as ye call 'em, first schalps I iver tuk, too, bedad, an' thin I tuk leg bail. In less'n fifteen minutes half o' the Quane's own was a chasin' me, an' they follyed me clane pasht Owegy village. I wasn't sure o' yere bein' here ontill I see the chafe an' his riverence carryin' ye in. An that's all."



## CHAPTER X

### MR. KIRKLAND DOES ME A SERVICE

**H**OWEVER much the female portion of Okwaga community may have hated Tim Murphy and me in the succeeding years of the war, there was certainly no evidence of such hatred that morning of May 2nd, 1776. They seemed rather to look upon us as heroes, and old and young struggled to do us service. "An' I'm wonderin' what ud the bucks say," grinned Tim, as a repast that would have shamed many a civilized table was set before us.

"Those bucks feel differently toward us than you think, Tim," was my reply. "It is probably true, that if they ran across you, they would compel you to either go with them and fight for the king, or suffer the consequences; but as yet, they are not wrought up to the point where they will do murder without provocation. Wait awhile. Then you'll see. This war is going to stir up all the latent devil that Mr. Kirkland has been laboring for years to put down. He had them pretty well under his influence. There were probably fifteen hundred professing Christians among the bucks alone, and about all the younger women and girls were endeavoring to live right. This war is going to put them back where they were. The English, through the agency

of such men as the Butlers and younger Johnsons, that fellow McDonald in the Schoharie, whom I suspect, and others, will in a year undo all the labors of the missionaries for twenty years past. They will not hesitate to use rum to incite, where other influences will not accomplish their purpose. They will buy whig scalps even, as they have for years bought peltry. They will devastate all this border country. The outposts of civilization on the Mohawk, in the Schoharie and as far in toward Albany as these Tories dare go, will be visited by the hatchet and the tomahawk. Neither old age nor extreme youth will be spared. The good, the virtuous,—all will suffer death or torture worse.”

While I was speaking, Mr. Kirkland and Skenando had come in again, and Mr. Kirkland now addressed me. “ Peter, I hear that you have formed some plans for the future. I am about to leave the village, is there anything that I can do for you before I go? ”

“ Mr. Kirkland, as I before told you, I’m going down the Delaware. I’m unfit for service along the border. I have all that property you know of, hidden over near Cook House. I’d like to get it to market. Tim is going down with me to his home over on the Pennsylvania side. Will you and Skenando use your influence to have some of these old men and squaws carry me over on a litter? I’m unable to walk—couldn’t make it in a week. I’m too big for little Tim to carry. If it was Tim that was wounded, I wouldn’t ask any easier job than carrying him over, but I weigh nearly or quite two hundred and fifty, brawny as I am, and despite all the blood that

I've lost. When I'm in proper trim, you know, I weigh twice as much as he does."

"Yes! yes! Peter. Glad to do that or anything else I can. Let me see! You're going to Philadelphia. Know anybody there?"

"Never was outside these woods as far as Albany since I can remember, Mr. Kirkland. No, I'm going among strangers. I shall sell my furs and stay there for a time; maybe as long as my money lasts. Certainly until I am well and strong."

"All right, too, my son. Good idea! I'm sure a little outside life won't hurt you, and at your age and with the experience you've had, it may do you great good. You've a good head on your shoulders and a magnificent physique, as I've often told you. You ought to make a man of note, if you can push your studies. In fact, I don't know that one man in a thousand could have made as much out of poor opportunities as you have. Now let me advise you. Go to Jason Horne. I will give you a letter of introduction to him. He is a fur dealer, doing business at Philadelphia, or was when I last heard of him a year ago. As he is a Quaker, he will probably be there in business now and not away to the wars. Some three years ago, he lost much of his property through endorsements, and has since been compelled to do business in a very small way, I understand, for want of capital. Both he and his wife were relatives of my mother. Anyone I send to them will be welcome. Both are fine scholars and if you seek instruction while recuperating from your wounds, they will be glad to assist you. Jason is one of the finest classical scholars in the colonies.

Mr. Kirkland Does Me a Service 87

I do not know a better tutor. I will if I can, write a letter strong enough to insure you a home with them."

I thanked him most heartily, and after my dinner, which had grown cold while we talked, I fell asleep.

## CHAPTER XI

### ON THE WAY TO PHILADELPHIA AND POLITE SOCIETY

**T**HERE was little of importance that befel Murphy and me during our twenty-two days' journey from Okwaga to Philadelphia. The first part of our trip—from Okwaga to Cook House—was very wearisome to me. I was nervous and irritable. It was not pleasant to be carried by women, even if they were squaws and old, and I fretted greatly. We were two days making that first short distance, for I was a heavy burden. Skenando and Mr. Kirkland accompanied us as far as where the trail branched off to Unadilla and the Charlotte river country. Murphy went on ahead from there to Cook House, and by the time we arrived, had patched up and put into serviceable condition, an old batteau he had found on a former visit. It had come down from up river after that first freshet and had lodged in the willows near where the river curves around to the southeast. Just what to do with our horse, however, had puzzled us much. We could not take him with us, and where to leave him we did not know. Not anticipating serious trouble, I had calculated on packing down through the Delaware and Mingo country, trading as we travelled, but my condition and the troublous times considered, we had now decided it

best to take boat, travel by night and as fast as I could stand it. We had, therefore, a horse to dispose of.

So I began negotiating with the squaws, for an exchange of beaver skins, a quantity of which I knew their lords had left at Okwaga, when they went with Brant. I need not detail my negotiations further than to say that I exchanged the to me worthless horse, for enough of those skins to net me nearly \$300 in Philadelphia. We lay at Cook House two days, while Murphy and the squaws, by the aid of the horse, brought the skins to our boat. Then we floated down by night, lying in hiding during the daytime, until we were within fifty miles of Trenton, from which point we travelled as we pleased.

It was a beautiful mild spring evening when we steered to the west of Wind Mill Island, above Philadelphia, and aided by the tide, made for the upper end of the long stretch of docks commencing just below Dock creek. Murphy declared Dock creek the best place to run in and so we put in there. I had greatly improved in health during the journey, and moved about with so much less pain, that I now desired to go ashore and seek Jason Horne, but Murphy would not hear to it.

"It may mane a tramp of several miles," was his argument. "Nayther ye nor me knows jist the pint from which the Harne projects. May be round up on the other river, two miles or more beyant an' over a country, I'm towld, the spring mud is deep in yet, me bye; so do ye lay here, watch the vessel an' cargo, see that nobody distarbs it, an' it's me'll trail the Harne to his lair."

It was probably best that I took his advice, for I was certainly a peculiar looking object, even in that city so frequented by all classes. My garb was that of an Oneida, as it had been for two years, and while I had exchanged my blanket for a shirt of buckskin, still my hair was long (I had not shaved in seven weeks), and owing to the suffering and loss of blood I had sustained, I must have been somewhat haggard. I had no mirror, but Murphy had made so many comments on my appearance all the way down the river, that I could imagine myself a sight. My great size, too, would render me conspicuous, and it was without doubt fortunate that Murphy went out across the city. He was gone less than two hours, but it seemed an age to me, and when he did return he was evidently greatly excited, for he was moving as if in great haste as I could see in the gathering twilight, and when he spoke, his voice betrayed his feelings.

“ Find him, Tim? ”

“ Faith an’ I did, an’ whin I give him his letther from His Riverence, what sh’ud the owld broad brim do, but order out his negroes wid a chair.”

“ A chair! Why what do you mean, Tim? ”

“ I mane pfwhat I say, ye—but I’ll call no names now. A chair bedad! He inquired afther yer hilt, an’ whin I towld him I was yere man, called ye me masther. Pfwhat d’ye think o’ that? Thin I towld the owld roosther about yere fight, the murdher ye did, an’ begorra, yere a hero. I tho’t Quakers had no fight in ’em, but bedad, here’s wan gritty as a fresh fried cake rowled in sand. Ye ought a seen his eyes flash. He thinks he’s intertainin’ the Dutch Pathroon wid an Oirish squire. An’ ain’t it a purty

sight ye'll be whin yere dumped out inter the gintlemin's fine drawin' room?." Here Tim's mirth got the best of him and hugging his stomach, he bent his long body down over his short legs in spasms of laughter.

"Tim! you miserable little wretch!" I began. Then I saw that I was in for it and must make the best appearance possible. "Do you run back and tell the gentleman—" I stopped short, for a fine looking old Quaker, accompanied by two negro servants carrying an ancient sedan chair, had appeared on the dock above. The old gentleman began climbing down the ladder, and clambering over my bales and bundles, was soon shaking my hand.

"So thou art direct from Friend Samuel, Mr. Ehlerson?"

"Yes, sir. As direct as the windings of the river and my strength for travel would allow. We left Mr. Kirkland twenty-two days ago to-morrow morning."

"And well, thy servant telleth me?"

"Not my servant, Mr. Horne. Mr. Murphy is but a travelling companion of mine. He came with me without agreement of compensation."

"I fear he is mischievous. From his language, I gained the idea that he was thy servant; also that thou wast wounded. While I like not strife or blood letting, I was persuaded that it was my duty to entertain thee as becometh a hero in such condition."

I saw that I had a queer *Quaker* to deal with. "Be seated, Friend Horne," said I, "that I may set you right regarding myself." He seated himself



on a bale of skins and the slaves strolled out of the dock as we talked, Murphy with them.

"I fear, sir, you have not a proper understanding of my true character. I should not so freely speak concerning myself, did I not suspect that Mr. Kirkland in his kindness has recommended me to you more highly than I deserve."

Then in as few words as I could, I told him my history from the day I could remember. I told it plainly and without excessive stress or emphasis, yet I noted that at certain portions, notably the death of Aunt Barbie, my flight from the Mohawk, my life with Skenando and the fight at Okwaga, the old man trembled with excitement, or pity, and seemed greatly moved. It was now so dark that I could not see his face. I knew he could not see me in my uncouth attire, as he must later, and so I finished with these words: "And these are my reasons for presenting myself to you in such attire as I do. A man just out of the woods, need not be expected to come in broadcloth, peruke and wig, for I am no gentleman of fortune, yet neither should he come in the breech clouts and blankets of an Indian, to call on civilized people. This is why, my dear sir, I must decline to enter the chair you have so kindly provided. I may need it, for I am unfit to travel, but I am as yet unfit to come in contact with any civilized man's belongings. I appreciate your kindness, but I must find other conveyance to a place where I can get a bath and put on clean buckskins. I will then come to you later. Now can you direct me to such a place? I am a stranger here, you know, as I am to all cities. I fear to strike out into the town alone. That was why I sent to you."

Friend Horne arose. "And thou art unfit, as well, to go to any public house of respectability. In this district thou wilt be imposed upon and robbed by those who seem to believe sailors and woodsmen but fair game. A private house is the proper place for thee. It is for thy best interests to come with me."

Seeing I still hesitated he went on another tack. "Sir! Thou mayst not know it, but thou art most ungallant, in this, thy refusal. It is not my conveyance thou dost reject, but another's—my niece's. She is not a Friend, as am I and my wife, but a southern lady with southern ideas of hospitality. She is my ward and liveth with me. She heard of thee through this young man Murphy, and it was her command, not mine, that sent this conveyance. She will be greatly hurt in feeling, and disappointed, if her kindness be rejected. If thou wilt come as thou art invited, I will see to it that thy room is not invaded until such time as thy toilet be completed. To-morrow being the Lord's day, and most of the shops being shut up for the night now, I cannot procure thee civilized clothing, and, on account of thy great size, mine would not suffice thee; but if as I understand, thou hast clean raiment of deer's skin, thou wilt surely appear well enough, until such time as other garments can be procured."

"Go ahead, ye Dutch fool," came in a whisper from Murphy, who had within the last minute come down off the dock and into the boat again. "Ye cuddent choose a betther dress to appear before the leddies in. Let the nagurs come down an' help ye up the laddher, while I git the rig outen the pack. Kim on down here, byes!" he called out in a louder

voice, and the darkies, with teeth and eyes gleaming through the darkness, came nimbly down. They were strong fellows and in two minutes they had me in the elegant sedan, the first I had ever seen. Murphy came hastening after with my razor, a suit of buckskin with which I had provided myself, including cap, shirt, coat, short clothes, leggings, and moccasins, as well as some other needed articles. All these he bundled up, tied a thong about, and put in beside me.

“I’ll be sure and luk afther all the luggage, Mither Ehleron,” he said, taking off his hat with a great show of respect, before Friend Horne. Then putting his head farther in he whispered: “It’s the great sind off I give ye up at the house beyant. Shtiffen up now, ye big omadhaun, an’ chaarm the leddies. Ye’ve the chance of a lifetime.”

## CHAPTER XII

### THE TRANSLATION OF A SAVAGE

**W**E had journeyed about a mile, I judge, Friend Horne's ringing staff close behind, when I heard him say: "Best rest thee, Robert and James. I will stroll on, as thy fast gait will soon overtake me." He had no sooner left my hearing than I tapped gently on the door and the head man opened it.

"Bob!" said I, hazarding a guess at the name of the darkey ahead, "who in the city dresses hair? I want my own natural hair put in the best possible shape on short notice."

"Me Jim. Dat Bob. He do dat, suh. He mighty handy, suh. He Carliny nigga. He mars-ter's body servant long years, 'fore marstah die. Me Bob's boy. He my farder. Dat reason Mis Edie bring me an' him up heah, suh. We *her* boys. We not Massa Horne's."

"Well! Can I get one of you to act as my body servant until—until I get one?"

"Suttinly, suh! Suttinly! Mis Edie wouldn't heah to no outsidah comin' in, suh. Not fo' a minute, suh! We tote you right up, suh, an' I jess stay right by ontill youah white boy git de goods stoahed, suh. Suttinly, suh!"

I comprehended the situation at once. These colored boys as well as the rest, had been given an idea

by that facetious Irish friend of mine that I was a backwoods nabob, rather than a refugee among the Oneidas. I was too weary to explain to them, as I had endeavored to do to Mr. Horne. Besides, it was unnecessary. So I leaned back again and awaited events. A few minutes later I became aware that we were mounting steps, double doors were thrown open, and, without stopping, the panting slaves bore me up a broad stairway, along an upper hall quite as broad, and setting the chair down before an open door, assisted me out into the most handsomely furnished room my eyes had ever beheld. Weak and nervous as I was, I felt like retreating, but that I was afraid to do for fear of being seen. I must make the best of the queer position fortune had placed me in, and with as much dignity as I could assume, I summoned the two slaves, submitted myself to them, and began to fit myself for presentation to my hosts. It seemed quite likely that at least one of the darkies had been body servant to a gentleman, for no two fellows ever were handier. They disrobed me as if I had been a child, and bathed me as tenderly as a mother might. Then I was shaved. My abundant black hair was shampooed, trimmed, braided and ribboned. My fine deerskin suit, with its quill trimmings and rich facings about the neck and shoulders, and on the moccasins, was then put on me, and I felt that I did not make a bad appearance.

A glance in the mirror showed me a young man apparently twenty-five years of age—I looked much older than I was—of enormous size and splendid figure. This was the largest mirror I had ever seen, and the first one of any size above an inch

square, that I had looked into in two years. It will therefore be easily imagined that my own image, as reflected, seemed to me like that of a stranger. I was much larger than I had thought, being fully a head taller than the tallest of the two negroes. My shoulders had broadened wonderfully, and I was in truth a giant. My smoothly shaven and carefully powdered features, were large, clean cut and regular and not unhandsome. My eyes, always black, were as jet now, and flashed and glittered, owing to my repressed excitement, I suppose. My teeth were large, even and white as milk. My unusual pallor, caused doubtless by all the blood letting I had sustained, rendered me less swarthy than I had been otherwise, and probably added to the interest that my appearance created.

I felt that I appeared to advantage the second that Bob and Jim assisted me from the chair and into the spacious old-fashioned drawing room, where sat the two ladies awaiting me. The older lady was a slight, sweet-faced, motherly-looking woman of fifty years, and when Jason, hurrying in, presented me to "My wife, Abigail," her welcome was as cordial as I could desire. Anyone sent to them so highly recommended as I was by Cousin Samuel, they were exceedingly well pleased to see. As she finished, she kept hold of my hand and assisted her husband in presenting me to Miss Edith Darrah. I took the fair hand Miss Darrah graciously extended, and as I bent over it, though I knew not why, I was completely fascinated. Some strange magnetism moved me mightily, and it was only by an effort that I could look elsewhere, or speak to any one else. Such are the boyish experiences of many, I suppose,

and with many oft repeated, but this was my first and last. Its severity may not therefore seem so remarkable. As I regained my self-control and took time to more critically survey the young lady before me, I was quite positive I had never before seen so beautiful a woman. Here apparently was strength and intelligence and sweetness, all that was desirable in woman. Never before in my life had I seen a woman even one-half so lovely.

She was very young—younger than I had at first thought her. She could not yet be twenty, but she had all the self-possession of a grande dame. Her voice was not the usual thin, girlish treble, so common to very young white women, but was full, rich and musical, with a cadence in laughter that reminded me of the chime of silver bells. In stature she seemed a trifle above the ordinary, for I noted that her hair was not worn as to height, in the extreme fashion of the day. Her figure was magnificent. Not voluptuous, but strong, firm and graceful, with softly rounded outlines. As to hair and complexion, I had thought her a decided blonde, at first sight, but under the lamplight the great masses of wavy hair lying in unpowdered curls upon her shapely head and down her beautiful neck, were nearer gold color, and the delicate blush of animation as she talked and laughed, was for the instant, rich as the tint of a dark-red fresh-blown rose. Her eyes were blue—a very dark blue—at times almost black and very expressive. When she smiled, they smiled first. When she expressed pity, approbation or reproof, they were the advance couriers. There was nothing cold, cruel or superficial about them. They seemed the windows of a pure wom-

anly soul. Her dress was simplicity itself, consisting of a plain close-fitting woolen gown cut low in the neck, with a wide collar of that rarest of all laces—Argentan.

Gradually I grew more at my ease, and as I glanced about at the rich furnishings of the room, and realized that I was an honored guest, it really seemed to me as if poor Pete Diehl, the charity child of the brutal Mohawk valley farmer, had been given the form and fortunes of a prince. Surely, neither Sir William in his day, nor yet Sir John in his, had either of them been received by a woman more beautiful, or in more becoming attire. My boyish fancy, for I was but a boy, was so elated, I was so exalted by this sudden change, that my tongue became loosened—it was ever a ready one—my pale cheeks glowed, my eyes flashed, my voice at times took on deeper and manlier tones, and I was the chief object of that little circle. I was very careful not to boast, but when asked about my adventures in the Indian country, told my story, and told it well. I pictured the gentle, innocent Owaimée; that sternly grand old man Skenando; the imperious, kingly Thayendanega; Miss Molly as she had looked to me the morning and again on the night when I had last seen her; Sir William in his last hours; the Iroquois villages and villagers in peace and war; that grand old Iroquois maniac Tamalagua, as he had appeared that night at the council and later in the storm on the mountain—all these and more, and my hearers seemed thrilled. In truth, I was the Othello of the little circle, and never in the castle of Brabantio did that famous Moor receive more sympathetic hearing, than did I in this refined Quaker household.



It would seem as if a man in my position—I had little of this world's goods, but the smattering of an education, and made no secret of it all—could scarce have been received as I was, nor yet retain his position as I did, but such was the true nobility of these people with whom my lot had been cast, that, even when they understood how Murphy had entirely overrated me, I was in every respect made one of them. I took occasion the day following my arrival, to once more lay before my good friend Horne, as well as his lady, my exact pecuniary position; also, to acquaint them with my desires and aspirations. They listened attentively.

“Thy lot hath indeed been a hard one Friend Peter,” murmured Mrs. Horne, while tears of sympathy gleamed brightly in her motherly eyes.

“And it seemeth our duty to aid the lad in any way we can, Abigail,” joined in Jason. “If thou canst with convenience make provision for his continued entertainment here, I can use him to good advantage at certain hours of the day in our storehouse, the business of which increaseth fast this spring season. It will also be a pleasant recreation for me to instruct him each evening as our Cousin Samuel requested.”

And thus began my life with the Hornes. My duties at the storehouse were light. Indeed, I had not work sufficient to soil my clothing, and no more than a man suffering from a bad wound as I was, could easily do. As I grew stronger, it seemed as if I had not enough for exercise. My studies I pursued in the early morning hours, my labor during the day, and my recitations and social enjoyments dur-

ing the evenings. Friend Horne had taken my packs off my hands, at a price equal to the highest one offered me by any other buyer, and I was the possessor of nearly a thousand dollars in gold and silver. A portion of this money I had pressed upon Murphy. I also induced him to accept a fine hunting knife and wanted him to accept a brace of pistols to go with his double barrel rifle, but this he positively refused to do. He came over across the town to call on the family once before he started for Shamokin Flats, where his parents resided; but during all the rest of his stay in Philadelphia, lounged about the Horne warehouse or along the wharves. The Indian women had cleaned my own rifle quite well, after it was recovered from the drift where Brant found me, and while in Philadelphia Murphy made a fancy peep sight of the tushes of elk, which sight he put on with his own hands, at the shop of the nearest gunsmith. I think that the good little fellow was perfectly happy in the thought that I was so comfortably situated.

On the morning that he finally decided to strike out by the river route to the upper settlements, and thence across to the Susquehanna, he stood silent a long time holding my hand. At last he blurted out: "Faith, an' I can't tell ye why, me Dutch giant, but suthin tells me ye an I'll be back in the wuds agin; that ye air born fer a soger me bye, an' not fer a daler in hides an' hair. I cud wish ye an aisier life than that of the backwuds, but it's little figger me wishes'll cut. There's a great overrulin' Providence, Pather, an' He says to me—it's not yere aise but yere duty I require of yez. It may be yer duty's here fer

the prisint, but 'twon't be long an' ye'll see it so. Now good-bye. May the Lord bliss ye, an' the divil fly away wid yer inimies."

Wringing my hand he made away, and twice before he turned the bend of the Old York road, leading up and across toward the Delaware water front, did I see him wipe his eyes with his hand. A warm heart, for all his bantering, had Murphy.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER

**M**Y life in Philadelphia that spring, summer and fall of 1776, seemed to me at the time to be very uneventful, and in one sense it was. I did not participate in any of the stirring incidents of that period. My daily routine was to arise at 4:30, take a cold bath, set my little spirit lamp going, and, no matter what the weather, to sally out for a brisk fifteen minute walk. Then I came back, drank a small cup of hot coffee, which had meanwhile been brewing over my lamp, ate a slice of brown bread, and sat down for a hard study of two hours. At seven, I went out for another short walk, usually meeting Miss Edith somewhere about the grounds, and we would return to the house together, for our breakfast, which in this well-ordered household, was invariably waiting at 7:30. Jason and his good wife Abigail were always present, always cheerful and always serenely pleasant.

There was no formal religious ceremony, as was the general custom in Quaker households, at this, our first daily meal, except that having awaited one another until all four were present, Jason took his place at the head of our little table, and sitting there, repeated a verse of the Scriptures. Aunt Abigail followed with another, then I, then Edith, and bow-

ing our heads for a single minute, we all four sat in silent prayer."

Now I had never as a child, been taught to pray, and I confess that, at first, I simply bowed my head for form's sake and said no prayer. But one morning it so happened that I stole a glance at Edith, and beheld her with eyes closed, lips moving and a look on her sweet face such as only communion with a loved friend can lend. The thought smote me then with a force that was startling—her God was not my God. Why not? Then and there I wished to know God; to walk with Him. I had never before felt in this way. Mr. Kirkland's long, well meant and really eloquent talks, had never brought me to a state of mind where I felt the necessity of seeking divine favor or guidance. Yet this one glance at the face of that pure young girl at prayer, had moved me religiously, as nothing ever had before. As one holding aloof from God, I was denying myself to my duty and was unworthy of her friendship. As one performing a dumb show for mere form's sake, I was deceiving her and my good friends every time I bowed my head. I closed my eyes quickly, bowed my head yet more reverently and really prayed.

I never stole another peep at her face when I should have been at prayer. I had no need. I could see it with my eyes closed. It seemed the sweetest privilege I had ever enjoyed, to approach the Throne of Grace in her company. I could not at that time have told why I felt as I did. I did not know what love was—the love of man for woman. To be sure I had loved Owaimée, but even as I loved Skenando, or Murphy or Mr. Kirkland. A new love

had now sprung up within me—a love for God and for Him only, I thought it. It warmed my heart; made me more cheerful; showed me brightness in the world that I had never before seen; rendered me broader and better; gave me increased respect for myself.

No refining influences except those of the good Dominie had ever before been exerted upon me.

I had come out of the wilds almost a savage. I had been thrown into the society of the utmost refinement, and that too at an impressionable age. I had ever been an admirer of the beautiful. Here was beauty of feature, form, mind and Christian character, comprised in one woman. That woman permitted me the enjoyment of intimate society. I had not been three months under her influence, before I was radically changed. I retained all the will power and determination I had brought from the woods, and I had gained traits that would never have developed had I remained there. I could see that I was expanding; that my mind was growing; that I was already more of a man than I had once even hoped to be. Now, I must guard against mistakes. Presumption seemed my nearest pitfall. Yes, I must guard against that. It seemed to me as if there were little danger of my committing that offense against any but these three friends of mine, I must watch myself and see to it that I did not transgress in this respect. I respected Jason Horne and was growing to love him, as men love one another. I also respected his wife Abigail, and loved her as a son might a mother. But Edith, I worshipped, and the belief was slowly possessing me, that she looked on me as a brother; as such respected

me. I thought that I was returning her affection in kind. It was as a brother, I flattered myself, that I brought her flowers and pretty little gifts such as my purse could afford, as a brother that I rode with her when I could be spared from the storehouse. Sometimes the young aristocrats of the city sent out invitations or requests for her company on equestrian excursions, but unless I was included she rarely went. When she did go, I was always relied upon for all those little attentions which women require.

In her turn, as clever sisters usually do with awkward brothers, she instructed me in music and the stately dances of the day; for she was an accomplished performer on the spinet, had a phenomenally sweet voice, and was a particularly graceful dancer. She seemed to take great pleasure in my aptitude in acquiring these accomplishments, and was most painstaking in the instruction she gave me in them, and under her constant tutelage, I soon began to change from an awkward backwoods giant to a gentleman of comparatively easy manners.

Thus wore away that spring, summer and fall and winter of 1776-7.

Serene in my confidence, I enjoyed and lived my new life. I had never before known what life really was. Its possibilities for enjoyment. I was, however, to have a rude awakening.

We were returning from church one spring Sabbath, Edith and I. We had been to the little chapel which at that time stood where the road to Gray's Ferry first bears north along the higher grounds to the east of the Schuylkill. We sometimes attended the meeting of Friends with the Hornes, but that

did not interfere with our attendance at this little chapel, the first of its sect, as I remember in all that Quaker neighborhood, and one of the first, aside from Christ church, in all the city. Edith attended there because it was with the established church she had worshipped at her own home in the south. I went to chapel at first because Edith did, and finally because I liked it best.

As we turned in on the grassy lane, leading north from the Gray's Ferry road that day, the mettlesome Selim forged ahead and up the hill toward the High street road. Laughing back at me, his young mistress urged him on, until, with my slower mount, I was perforce, left behind. I well knew I could not overtake her until she chose to wait for me, and I was also pretty certain that she would wait at the first good hiding place. This was her usual trick,—to back her horse into the bushes and as I rode by, looking ahead for her, to throw a stick or a May apple at me, laughing like a merry child if perchance I did not at first detect her. But to-day she did not wait. I hurried my horse along and strove to catch a sight of her in this thicket or that. I knew she must be ahead, for Selim's shoe tracks showed plainly in the soft damp earth. The lane had been winding, but there was a branch, leading to the east, just north of the "Quaker Buildings." From this branch north, was a straight stretch of some distance,—in fact, clear to our own gates, about half way north and south, between High street and Callowhill road. As I passed the branch before mentioned, I saw other tracks coming out from the town, and from there forward, two horses seemed travelling abreast. I spurred out into the open and



five hundred yards ahead, beheld my lady and a new escort. I was forced to admit, at the first glance, that so far as appearances went, the change was decidedly for the better; and somehow a feeling of resentment against the laughing couple, took possession of me. This was not the first time that I had seen her riding with young gentlemen, for she often rode about the city; but heretofore it had been my especial privilege to escort her to and from church. Here now was an interloper. My rights and privileges had been encroached upon. I grew sulky, and pulling my horse down to a slow walk, allowed the two ahead to once more gain upon me. An instant later, Edith glanced over her shoulder and seeing me, energetically waved me ahead with her riding whip. I paid no attention to the summons, and so she and her new escort drew rein and awaited me. As I rode slowly up, they were chatting, and Edith was laughing merrily at some remark of his. I suspected it was concerning me or my ancient steed, and this suspicion did not improve my temper any, you may be sure.

“Quedar! What is the matter with old Jasper, that he is so slow to-day?” Then she added as I rode nearer, “Captain Mordaunt Woolsey, Mr. Ehleron, a friend of ours and one of the family.”

“Pleased to meet you, sir, I am sure,” smiled the gallant captain, and he extended his hand. I gave Jasper a jab with my right spur that carried the astonished beast to one side with a bound, and as he pranced about like a colt, I raised my hat and bowed to this new acquaintance, who withdrew his hand and raised his hat in turn.

Edith did not seem to notice my very apparent

sulkiness, but gave expression to some light badinage upon my tardiness, to which I made no reply. Then I began looking Woolsey over, and as I looked grew yet more angry. I could hardly refrain from wringing the fellow's neck. I felt that I had good reason for anger. Here was a young girl, pure as the breath of the morning, receiving as a friend and introducing as such, a young blood whom I had seen the night before, down in the region below Dock street, drunk as a Piegan. To be sure he looked all right now. He was a far handsomer man than I. He was better clothed. His captain's uniform fitted him like a glove. His mount was a blooded English stallion under perfect control, for the captain rode well. Yet when I saw this gentleman down near the Delaware water front the night before, he and his companions—two Continental lieutenants—were reeling about in a low garden resort there, dancing on, and kicking over, tables, and deporting themselves generally as drunken people will. I realized that the captain might not be exceptionally bad. Many young men of social position and property, indulged in such escapades in those days; yet it made my blood boil, to think that Edith should be ignorant of all this and be led to introduce such a fellow as a friend of hers. I felt as if I could kill him for daring to present himself in her society, after what my own eyes had told me of him. But what could I do? Such things were customary, and until some public scandal debarred him, he would continue to do this. It was not even my privilege to order him off. I ground my teeth and rode behind.

Presently, however, I mastered myself better, and

while I did not attempt to lead the conversation, I managed to answer yes and no fairly civilly, to such questions as were addressed to me.

Arrived at the house, we gave our horses to Bob and entered together. The captain I soon sized up as the typical dandy of the day. Nearly six feet in height, of fairly strong build, with bold blue eyes and regular features, his address was in every way perfect. He looked like an Englishman of the better class, but proved to be one of Moore's men, now on a furlough, made necessary as he informed us, by a wound, received at that desperate affair at Moore's creek bridge one year before. He was one of those "men of first fortunes" of North Carolina, who early in the year, to quote the famous records, "footed it the whole time to encourage the commoners;" and I may add, like many another of that gentry, was flattered by the chronicler. He had gone into the action a lieutenant, so he boasted, and by reason of his wounds had been made a captain of cavalry. His glory he would have us know, had "come demn near to costing him his life," and for nearly a year he had been kept from active duty. He was now about to take his command and before doing so, had come north, to visit friends and relatives in Philadelphia. I was later to learn that much of this tale of his was invention, but as I had no reason now for disputing him, held my peace and listened.

When we reached the drawing room, the captain and Edith began talking of southern friends and acquaintances, so being left somewhat out of the conversation, I made my excuses, and leaving them together, wandered outside the grounds, and westward along the ridge toward the river. I knew

that my usual Sunday afternoon with Edith was spoiled, that our early Sunday dinner would be ready soon, that my absence would create comment if not concern; yet I could not compel myself to sit by and see that fellow made much of. I wandered on through the swamp path, across the little stream running parallel with the Wissahikon, up across the higher ground, thence down to the Schuylkill. There near the water's edge, just where the Wissahikon debouches, I sat and sulked until the long spring day was nearly done. Just before twilight I was aroused from my moody reflections by a sound of voices, and looking up to where the cross road from the Middle Ferry wound north, nearest the river, I saw Miss Edith and the captain riding along together. He was talking very earnestly, and she with her face upturned, was looking with equal earnestness into his eyes. The sight maddened me. My arms came up with their old motion, my finger crooked and had I held a rifle,—

As it was, I seized a dry limb, started up and made as if to head them off, but at that instant he finished his story. They started up, rode faster, and I am glad to say I was too late to intercept them. Had I reached the road in time, there must have been murder. My anger frightened me as I recovered from it somewhat, and at nine o'clock I stole into the house and up to my room unobserved, and retired, nor did I go down again that night.

## CHAPTER XIV

### I HEAR A STORY

“**Q**UEDAR, what *was* the matter with you yesterday, were you sick, or have you heard bad news?” asked Edith the morning following.

“I do not know that I am sick, Miss Darrah, nor have I received bad news of any kind,” I replied stiffly.

“What do you mean by calling me Miss Darrah, sir?” and she caught me by the coat and pulled me about until I stood facing her. “You haven’t done that before since the first week of our acquaintance.”

“And why do you sometimes call me Mr. Ehler-son, Miss Edith?” replied I confusedly, looking down into her clear eyes, then hastily averting my own.

“Because—because,—well! to tell the truth, because I’ve fallen into the habit of it. I don’t know just why; but when you have one of your grave moods on, I seem too familiar if I say Quedar.”

“I suppose if it were Mordaunt”—I blurted out, then stopped, regretting what I had said. But it was out, and I might as well go on—“it would be pleasanter,” I added, even as a look of shame and guilt spread over my face.

For an instant anger flamed in her expressive eyes and the lips took on a severely firm look, as if a reprimand was forming. Indeed, the reproof even started. "Mr. Ehleron, I do not know that you have any right—you are pre—" here she stopped again. The flush of indignation and the anger gleaming in her eyes died away, together. She looked at me searchingly—saw my distress. Something,—maybe the true cause of my foolishness, seemed to dawn upon her. What did her half pleased expression denote? I was yet wondering, when it had fled as swiftly as it had come. Her face took on a look of demure severity. With a saucy toss of her head and an elaborate curtsey, "verily! verily Friend Quedar, I am moved to impart to thee, the information that thou art a great silly goose," she said.

With this, she darted past me, and catching up her skirts, started swiftly up the broad stairway, blushing furiously, but looking far from angry. Three steps up the stairs brought her face on a level with my own. I leaned over the rail and laid a detaining hand upon her arm. She looked me full in the eye now as if to say—what dare you venture next? I felt as if I had transgressed; as if I could not let her go until I had asked her pardon.

"Miss Edith, you are right. You are very kind not to reprimand me more severely. I know not how to express myself as a more polished gentleman might, but I am sorry, truly sorry for my conduct. As you started to say a moment since—I have not the least right. I have presumed on your kindness. It shall never occur again. Will you not forgive me? Say you will?"

The mischievous eyes looking into mine fell, and she replied: "Why yes, if—if you think your crime demands forgiveness, I will. But Quedar, don't be such a goose! Don't take such a serious view of everything! You haven't done anything so very wicked."

"But this is the most serious matter of all my life to me, Miss Edith."

"There you go again—worse than ever," and she blushed once more. "Yes, if that will quiet you, I forgive you. Now let's not mention it again, it's not worth it."

I replied with a sigh that came clear from my shoes. She smiled, but not very mirthfully I thought, and breaking from me tripped up the stairs. A half hour later, I saw her bending over some needlework on the veranda, which ran across the front of the house. She made an entrancing picture, sitting there in her white dress, with its short waist and transparent sleeves, through which the round white arms and shoulders gleamed. I paused to feast my eyes. I could not resist the inclination. She looked up and caught my gaze. Then she blushed again, and her head bent low over her work.

"Good-bye for the day, Miss Edith."

"Good-bye for the day, *Mr. Quedar*." She did not look up as she said this, nor had her blushes departed. I noted her peculiar accent on the "Mr." and had half a mind to turn about and ask her to let me always call her Edith. "But," thought I to myself, "we've had scenes enough for one morning. I've made a fool of myself. I couldn't blame her if she never let me speak to her again." Then planning how I should conduct myself in future, with

what urbanity I should stand aside, no matter what chanced, I went down the driveway, strong in my new formed resolution.

But just outside the tall hedge, I met Captain Mordaunt Woolsey, mounted on his fine horse and arrayed in full new Continental uniform. At sight of him, that fierce rage arose within me again. Forgetting all my previous resolutions I was again murderous. My eyes were blurred as with a rush of blood; and in that brief instant, he swept past me. I turned my head in time to see that he had made a very courtly salute, which I like a boor had not acknowledged. If I could have summoned some excuse, I would have called him back and shown him some civility, but as it was, my brain was in a whirl, I was wild with a desire to pull him from that handsome horse and throttle him; to stamp upon his handsome face; to destroy his fine attire. Before I could master my emotions enough to go on about my business, even while I yet stood gazing, the gallant horse and rider had reached the broadening of the gravel drive before the steps, and the man was raising his hat, with all the grace of one who had profited by the society of a Lafayette or a DeKalb. I trembled from head to foot with rage. Then the memory of the night before came upon me. My anger was broken. My eyes filled with tears that ran down my cheeks as I strode out onto the roadway. I was angry at myself for such weakness, and I cursed myself under my breath very savagely, for a fool.

After a little, however, I regained my self control; and once more felt that I could stand by and see it all. In fact, that was my duty. What right had I,



a charity child, a callow youth of twenty-one, without education, wealth, even an honest name, to aspire to the hand of an heiress to one of the greatest estates in the colonies; a young lady of solid education as well as of wit, beauty and accomplishment. Just because she had been kind to me, had taught me as she might a favorite dependent without humiliating me, that was no reason why I should presume to equality. The lines of social status were very sharply drawn all through the colonies in those days. Especially was this true in the south and in Philadelphia and New York. I ought to know it. Yes. This temporary madness of mine, must be mastered, as between God and myself, there could be no sin in loving this woman. The offense was in showing my feelings so foolishly. That I could guard against, and hard as it was, I must. I set my jaws together and walked on the faster.

At dinner that evening I met Captain Woolsey again. He was to report for duty within twenty days, and must set out for a somewhat dangerous journey a week later. I bore myself as politely as I could at the table and later in the drawing room made myself agreeable to all.

Woolsey did not stay long after dinner that night, and after he had gone Friend Jason and I sat for some time before the open fire. He was smoking his long pipe with great deliberation and thinking deeply. As the firelight played over his high broad forehead and adown over his clear cut, high bred old face, I noted a look of amusement come and go, and twice he chuckled audibly. I was not smoking, for at that time I had not learned the soothing influences of the weed. I was studying him, and he was gaz-

ing into the fire. Finally, without looking at me, he asked:

“And what dost thou think of this young warrior guest of ours, my lad?”

“Why, sir! he seems exceedingly well favored as regards looks and social manners,” I replied.

“Yea! Thou hast judged properly my lad. He hath a fine address for a drawing room, but methinks it would be far better for him, had he more solid understanding. He seemeth to me to be lacking in good judgment.”

“How are his habits, Friend Jason?”

“I know not, my lad, from personal observation, but report hath it, that he casteth dice and risketh much at cards. Verily, I am almost persuaded that he depends on a matrimonial alliance with wealth, that he may meet obligations already incurred. As thou mayest know, it was by one of his family and stripe, that I lost my fortune.”

“No! I did not know that, Mr. Horne. It has been mentioned to me that you have been a loser, but I do not know how much nor how you lost it.”

“I lost thirty thousand pounds, by a signature that gave me no returns; that did another harm and that swept away all the fortune my wife’s father and I had been all our years accumulating.”

“Thirty thousand pounds! That is a large sum. How was it?”

“It was in tobacco speculation. This young man had a cousin, who was a nephew of my sister, by marriage. His father had died, five years ago now. Before the father’s death, he and I had for several years bought tobacco together. His business was in that line and mine in furs, as it is now.

It had been my custom to forward him or his house at Baltimore, papers of acceptance, signed in blank, and with these he managed the purchases. I attended to my own business here and he to that risk, by which we had annually, for years past, divided from four thousand to six thousand pounds. When he died, his son, a counterpart of this young man, solicited the same alliance. The first year I went down and superintended the buying. He was well versed in values, a good judge of tobacco by reason of the training his father had given him, and he turned a very pretty penny for us. The next year he did the same. The third year I trusted him and he failed me. He neglected business, gambled, staked all I had risked and lost it, together with all his own fortune. Then he joined the army and was killed."

"And you? What did you do?"

"I was about to take up teaching as a means of livelihood for both my wife Abigail and I were teachers in our earlier days, when a friend and relative of ours, Maurice Darrah, who married Edith, the sister of Abigail, sent for me. He was in his last sickness, but he pitied my condition, bought this old place from my creditors, lent me three thousand pounds with which to do business, and with that I started in again. That year was a good one for fur buyers. Prices trebled as soon as it seemed likely that war was to occur between the mother country and her colonies. I sold my purchases at three times their cost, repaid the loan advanced, and a considerable sum on this home as well. This year, if business be not broken up by some unforeseen circumstance, I shall once more own the old place, for it

hath been so arranged in the will. The estate must receive the money or give me unlimited time, as I may ask. At present, however, the estate owns this house, these grounds and the farm lands stretching out toward the river, subject to my right of redemption. I owe not only the money—some one thousand four hundred pounds yet, but a debt of gratitude as well—a debt which I can never repay. That is why I am telling thee all this and much more that must yet come.”

Here he stopped. I was puzzled. What did he seek? I pondered a minute. “I do not understand, Friend Jason, what possible bearing all this story can have on me. However, it is certainly an interesting one to hear.”

“What hath been told may not have bearing my lad, unless it may be best to acquaint thee with certain circumstances. It is that which is to come.”

“And what is that, pray? You speak in riddles.”

“Canst thou bear a shock? I regret that I did not tell thee all, months ago, but I did not dream it concerned thee, until I heard and saw thee at the stairway this morning.”

I blushed; then turned pallid, while a feeling of dread came upon me. I felt as if my heart had ceased its beating. “And you think this story that is to come, concerns me, sir?”

“It does, and others as well,” said the old man solemnly. Here he arose, and standing before me, looked into my face instead of the fire. “Edith Darrah is betrothed to this young man Mordaunt Woolsey, by the terms of her father’s will, but by no word, consent or knowledge of her own. It remains with Woolsey and me, the executor of the estate, to

first win the consent, which Maurice Darrah seemed to think would not be difficult. Woolsey was with him when he died. Edith was away at school. This may account for this strange will. But I must go back a little. Calvin Woolsey, the father of Mordaunt, was some thirty years ago, the patron of Maurice Darrah. He furnished him capital for business, when Darrah was on the verge of ruin, tiding him over at a critical time and saving his credit. Darrah never forgot that. At the time the elder Woolsey died, he left a much smaller estate than it was supposed he would leave. In fact when the final settlement was made it was found to be but five thousand pounds, and this so concerned Maurice Darrah that he would have fain assisted the heirs by a liberal gift of his own estate. However, the widow, Mordaunt's mother, died soon after. There were none left but this lad, and this small fortune was sufficient to support him in fairly good style. He was a wild intractable youth, even then, and promised the career of a spendthrift and gambler. This persuaded Friend Maurice that he had a duty to perform. He would save the lad from his habits. He therefore gave him to understand that if he mended his ways, he should be handsomely remembered. At this, the lad made a complete change and to all outward appearances, was perfect in his character. This pleased his patron greatly and he had perfect faith in him.

Edith's father held girls as but of little account, as compared with boys. He had always wanted a son and being constantly courted by this pleasant mannered lad, who even at a tender age, seems to have known on which side his bread was buttered,

he treated him quite like his own blood. In fact better in many ways, for he gave him his constant companionship, while Edith was sent away to school among strangers. It was generally supposed that at his death, or if he lived until the boy obtained his majority, something handsome would be done, but when he did die, two years ago, four years after his wife, all were surprised at a will, which left nine-tenths of his fortune, or approximately sixty thousand pounds to his daughter and her husband on her wedding day, providing she married Mordaunt Woolsey. About eight thousand pounds were left to public institutions in this city and in the south, principally in Baltimore. The marriage was to occur when Edith was twenty-three and Mordaunt twenty-seven—early in 1780. If for any reason the marriage did not occur, and if Mordaunt had not declined it, he was to receive twenty thousand pounds, to be held in trust for him until he was thirty and Edith was to receive the income of twenty thousand pounds until she married some one else and the five thousand pounds in lieu of all claims upon the estate, all other sums being applied pro rata to the public bequests mentioned first. By another provision of this singular will, it was not to be probated until 1780 and during the years intervening the estate, which was in securities, was to be administered by trustees, of which I am one, the family lawyer another, and the income of it was to be paid in regular quarterly allowances to Mordaunt, Edith and the public institutions mentioned. The young man is constantly pledging his allowance in advance; several times have we settled debts of his that must have caused much scandal, and I fear for

the future of this innocent true hearted daughter of poor deluded Maurice Darrah."

While the old man had been telling this long story, I found myself clutching hard at the mantel at times, and as he finished I was so agitated that I could scarcely speak. "And so it is for Edith's interest to marry this—indeed, she *must* marry this man."

Jason gave me a look of mingled scorn and pity. Then clearing his throat, he started in again. "Hold my lad! sit thee down. I have a word further to say to thee,—a story of my own life, to tell thee. It is short. The night the news of my own losses came to me and I stood without a penny in a home not my own, I was fifty-four years of age. The best part of my life lay behind me. A man of forty ruined financially, may recover, but there is small hope for a man of fifty-four. The whole bitterness of my situation came upon me. It broke me down. I sat before the fire, my head in my hands and deep groans escaped me. My wife Abigail coming in, coming quietly, as is her wont, found me thus and heard my moans.

"'Jason, what aileth thee?' she asked as she bent over me.

"I looked up at her, my eyes bloodshot. 'My wife! My Abigail, we are ruined! I have lost all! Every penny is swept away.'

"'And is that all, Jason?' she questioned anxiously. 'Thou hast thine honor?'

"'Yes! I have saved that, thank God!'

"'Well then! Thou hast that and me. Why mourn?'"

The old man ceased speaking and stood looking

into the fire again. I hardly knew how to reply, but finally I asked:

“Mr. Horne, why do you tell me of Edith’s financial affairs and then this other story? What inference shall I draw?”

“I told thee of Edith’s financial affairs because I felt it my duty as an executor—as her guardian. Also because I am thy friend—that you might know the truth.”

“And of the other, Mr. Horne? This other story?”

“Of the other? of the other? You ask me *that?* Damn it, man! I am human if I am a Quaker. My blood is *blood!*—not ice! I told thee because I took thee for a man, too. Leave the room sir, ere my emotions impel me to further curse thee and thy Dutch phlegm!”

“Hold, Friend Horne! Not so fast; What you choose to call my Dutch phlegm is not that. It is my honor sir, that asserts itself. It would not be honorable in me to take this woman for her fortunes, or from a husband more to her liking. I would not do it if I could. If he is worthy of her and by marrying him, she can be happier, I will do all I can, to bring that marriage about. I cannot tell you sir, my feelings toward her. That is a subject too sacred for any ears but hers, and her ears may never hear it. I will confess this much to you sir,—my animal passion has urged me to kill him. It urges me now to win her from him if I can, by fair means or foul. God pity me for having such instincts. To win her with all these odds against me, would be a glorious triumph to my grosser passions. It would feed my pride. It would give me what I would



almost barter heaven for; but it would make her the wife of a poor man. My better self says: 'Give her up. Give her to a man who can make her happier than you can; a man fitted by social training to move with her in her sphere.' My better self shall rule, so help me God! I will not even admit my love for her, to her, or any one else, until I am convinced he can never be her choice—that she will have none of him."

"Do you believe him worthy of her?" questioned Jason sharply.

"I am afraid he is not, sir; but am I a fit judge?"

"But suppose he wins her and then neglects her—even abuses her, for that is a trait of the family? What then, my lad?"

"Then sir! I will put these two hands about his neck and strangle him as a Seneca squaw might a dog."

"Thou wilt then, when it is too late, be both judge and executioner. Why delay? Why not act now? What is wealth to happiness?"

"But the responsibility of the hazard sir! I confess I am fearful of myself. Fearful that I may act from my own interest and not entirely from hers."

The old man straightened up and in most intense earnest tones began: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to happiness, as well as to fortune. Many men have been unjust to themselves and those they loved, because they had not confidence in their own worth. Remember that my lad."

"I do, sir, but I am unfit by birth, wealth or social station to make any woman like Edith happy. I am"—

“Hush lad! Say no more! Be just to thyself. Thou art an honest, clean man. Am I wrong?”

“I have always striven to be such, sir.”

“Thou hast bettered thy natural condition?”

“I have tried to, sir, and believe I have succeeded.”

“Is not such a man rather to be preferred by any true woman, than even a rich libertine?”

“I hope so, sir.”

“Then think on these things and do what seemeth right.”

“I’ll try to, sir. God helping me, I’ll try; but as yet I am undecided.”

“In this matter thou art a coward. If thy cowardice wreck two lives, may God forgive thee.”

“I’ll think well on what you have said, Friend Home.”

“Do so, Quedar. Good night!”

“Good night, sir!” and I left him scarcely comprehending the full import of what had passed.

## CHAPTER XV

### AFTER A WAKEFUL NIGHT

**T**RY as I would, I could not sleep that night. Neither could I lie awake and think connectedly. Thus the night passed in a drowsy stupor, yet a weight of wakeful agony bearing me down and tossing me about. Several times during its weary course I longed to arise, don my buckskins and lope away to the great woods. There would be comfort and coolness. There I would find sympathy. There I could stretch out at the base of some grand old tree, clasp its roots as I might a mother's knees, press my throbbing temples down into the cool mosses and whisper the story of my sorrow. Here! What was there here that I cared for, or had a right to care for? I must guard myself constantly against an inclination that meant murder. Surely, it was my duty to flee from such constant temptation. Oh! But this civilized life had been so sweet—yes, and so bitter too—still it might be—No, no! I would go early on the morrow.

That August of 1777 was torrid in Philadelphia and this was the worst night of the month, the heat was fearful. About 3 o'clock in the morning, soothed by my half formed resolution and it being cooler, I fell asleep. I must have slept soundly for an hour and a half. I did not know that I had slept at all,

when I opened my eyes, but the faint light outside proved that I must have dropped off for a time at least. My habit of awakening at 4:30 had awakened me now. I was not intending study this morning, but as I did not care to doze more, decided to arise. I had overslept myself a half hour and it was now nearly or quite 5 o'clock. I took my bath as usual, and found it most grateful this morning. Instead of going out before my coffee, I waited until it brewed, then I went for a long walk. The morning coolness which had revived me so greatly, seemed even more grateful to all nature. Never, even in spring, had I heard the birds sing more energetically. The copious dew on the second growth clover and on those flowers and sweet smelling shrubs which used to grow so abundantly along up the east ridge south of Middle Ferry, caused them to give forth unusual fragrance.

I wandered about aimlessly, mournfully enjoying it all, until the increasing heat warned me that it must be time to go in to breakfast. When I entered the grounds, no one seemed stirring save the servants. Everybody must have overslept. Bob and Jim I could hear over in the little yard beyond the main hedge where the former was telling Jim an incredible snake story, while at the morning milking. Susannah, with strident voice of coaxing tone, was wheedling the fowls into a small enclosure, that she might wring the necks of two or three for dinner. All these sounds came from beyond and behind the great boxwood hedge, that ran across the grounds from side to side, and apparently through the middle of the big house. No one was stirring in the front yard. The wide veranda was as yet cool

and moist, for neither the sun, nor the hot dry winds which all that month swept up from the south by day, had overcome the cooling effects of the night. I sat down on a low rustic roll-back settee and reclining there, my head on the rolling back, my hat well down over my eyes, my great length of limb sprawled out across the floor, I took of the beautiful prospect what I thought to be my last survey for some time to come. I had decided that I could no longer stay in this house. In my morbid state, I had determined to make a martyr of myself. I so desired to serve another, that I was blinded as to what was best. It wrung my heart, but to suffer for those we love is ever sweet pain. My mind was made up. I would leave Philadelphia that night, and my preparations while simple, would probably keep me busy during the day. This leaving was hard—harder than I had thought it. No wonder I was heavy hearted. Here in this great house, I had seen the first real happiness of my life. It did seem as if I was never destined for such happiness as came to other people, but—

There was a light rapid tread of slippared feet behind me, a rush and rustle of lavender scented skirts, two small white hands flashed before my eyes and then pink fingers pressed my lids, while the sweetest voice I have ever heard, with an amusing attempt at gruffness, was growling in my ear: "Guess who it is!"

"How could I ever do that?" said I slowly to give me time to think, although I had known before she was within a yard of me that it was Edith. While speaking thus to gain time, I had slyly thrown my long arm around behind the settee, and as I

finished speaking brought my big hand against a pair of plump shoulders, when a blushing laughing woman with both arms around my neck, had fallen over on me. Before she could spring back, I had caught both her wrists in my other hand and held her there despite her struggles.

“Let me go sir! you great bear! I’ll never play tricks on *you* again!” and while struggling she stamped her high heel slipper most angrily. At any other time I should have been so confused and frightened by my peculiar position as to have felt faint or giddy, but now my nerves were like steel. A masterful emotion possessed me. I paid no heed to her apparent anger, but still retaining my hold on her crossed wrists with my one hand, passed the other about her waist and gently swung her around, until pouting, rumped and very pink of face she sat on the arm of the settee to my right. At first, she refused to look me in the eye, but as I softly pronounced her name she raised her eyes to mine. As she did this, her pout and frown of anger gave way for an instant to a smile which seemed to come despite her efforts at repression. She quickly conquered it, however, and assuming her severest look, declared as well as she was able for deep breathing: “Quedar! if it had been some other man I might have expected this, but *you*—I will never attempt such a prank again. Let me go now, please! I am fairly caught.”

“So you didn’t think I was human?” and I released her, when she arose and withdrawing from my embrace stood arranging her hair to hide her confusion. I continued looking steadily and questioningly at her. She would look in my eyes and

would then avert hers to look off across the wide expanse of meadow and forest. The blushes came and went on her beautiful face and neck. Her bosom rose and fell with suppressed emotion. I was still looking at her admiringly, when I detected tears welling up in her eyes. I bent forward, caught her hand and started to arise to my feet,—she was sobbing now,—when she snatched her hand from me and ran weeping toward the little arbor. Somewhat dazed by the enormity of my offense, I arose and followed her.

As I bent to enter the little door I saw her seated in the farther corner, her eyes cast down as if in shame, her hands nervously twisting at her pretty apron. She was heroically struggling to keep back her tears and sobs. I was deeply distressed now and advanced toward her, when she covered her face with her hands again and commenced sobbing like a frightened child. I possessed myself of one hand and as I knelt before her kissed the wet finger tips.

“Edith! Little Sister! was I rough? Forgive me? I will never do such a thing again. Indeed! I am going far away to-night. I may never see you again.”

As I began I saw a smile beaming through her tears, but as I mentioned my intended departure, a look of surprise quickly changing to one akin to terror, took its place. She was trembling, and her face visibly paled before me.

“I may never have another chance to tell you how much I reverence and respect you, how much I am indebted to you. I came to this place a rough uncouth woodsman, you received me kindly, saw some good in me I hope and out of your kindness

have been all to me that a dear sister could have been. From your high womanly estate you bent and lifted me. Dear little girl, I reverence you as the adoring soul might a saint, for your influence has changed the whole tenor of my life; but I feel that I cannot in justice to us all, stay here longer, nor can I for that matter, in justice to my country. My services are needed on the New York frontier, and there I am going."

While talking I had held her hand fast and now as I finished and released her, she clasped them together and sat looking straight at me, her face once more white as the petals of the lily, a pitiful, pleading half shamed expression, a sort of dumb agony gleaming out from her wide open eyes.

"Quedar!" she finally gasped, "Is that all?" Then she sank back, turned half from me and once more covered her face with her hands. The hot blushes were coming again. I watched them suffusing face, neck and brow,—burning blushes that the little hands could not hide, and my conceit there and then for the instant whispered to me "This girl loves you." Almost instantly I banished that blissful thought, and reaching for the trembling hands, tenderly possessed myself of them. I felt that I must say more.

"No! Dear one! No. That is not all! Forgive me dear sister if I am wrong—but I have something to ask of you,—a favor I should not dare ask if I did not believe you know me so well,—a favor, Edith, that I have never yet sought of living woman, one which I shall never ask of another than you. Won't you give me *now* a kiss of parting, and a promise that you will often pray for me?"



She made no sign except to impulsively lift her face to mine. Then holding her fast in a strong embrace our lips met in one long kiss that carried benediction to my soul. She did not seem to desire release, and so for a blissful minute I held her close, while I whispered: "And you will pray for the big brother?"

"Yes Quedar."

"And if you ever need a friend—if husband that may win you, friends or relatives that may have won your confidence betray it, if you are ever in trouble of any kind and need human help, you will send for the big brother?"

"Yes, Quedar! Yes!"

I released her. She looked at me for an instant smiling bravely, while the tears flowed fast, and then sinking down abjectly before me on the low bench, covered her face with her hands and shook with sobs. I had risen to my feet, but I knelt again beside her and smoothed her hair with my great clumsy hand, that trembled as I heard her whispering over and over: "Oh Quedar! Quedar! Why must you leave me?"

"It is for the best, little Sister," I replied, the tears running fast over my own cheeks. "It is better so. I have staid too long I fear as it is. But remember, when you need me, let the Hornes know. No matter where I am, no matter where you are, I shall come to you." I felt that I could not longer forbear taking her in my arms and comforting her, so I whispered brokenly: "God bless and keep you little girl," and hurried out of the summer house, just as Jason came out on the veranda to call us to breakfast. He saw me coming and went in again.

I waited a little, then went back to the arbor door. Edith was lying as I had left her, her form still shaking with sobs. "Breakfast" was all I said and turning, I hastened to my room. She came up and presently I heard her laving her eyes in cold water. Then looking as light hearted as we could, she ahead, we went down the stairs together, nor do I think that Jason or his good wife suspected the scene that had but just occurred out in their arbor. Both expressed considerable surprise and concern at my sudden determination, and both looked at Edith as if they expected her to show regret, but to their astonishment, though not to mine, she was composed. She was, however, extremely pale, and that pallor did not leave her face while she discussed with Mrs. Horne the making up of my pack. When I opened that pack in the woods up back of the Wissahikon, I found many things for my comfort, but none so precious to me as a small miniature of Edith's face, painted on ivory. Underneath the picture, inside the little case, was a tiny braid of her hair, lustrous as burnished gold.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ON THE ROAD AGAIN

**D**URING the year and a half that I had remained in Philadelphia, I had heard much of the war raging to the eastward and north. I had been sorely tempted hundreds of times, and especially during the winter previous, to offer my services to my struggling country; but while I was one of the best of woodsmen, I knew that nature had not moulded me for a soldier of the regular stripe. I was also anxious to push my education so as to in part make up for my earlier loss of opportunities, and for these and other reasons had remained quietly in the city. I had been so moved by my desire to enlist at times, however, as to be nearly or quite incapable of work. An especially severe attack of this fever had laid hold upon me soon after the spring breakup of 1777, and so for months past, I had not discussed war news more than I could possibly help, had not even read the papers for weeks at a stretch, and but for the intense interest I had taken in the infamous Lee-Conway-Gates cabal, it is probable that I should have known little of what was going on.

I had heard of Brant several times. His name had become a terror all along the New York and Pennsylvania border. Less than ten days from the

time he had left me at Okwaga, his fierce war-cry had been heard at the battle of the Cedars, two hundred miles north, and there, as elsewhere, he had triumphed. His movements were so swift and secret, his bravery in battle so desperate, his powers of generalship and skill in conducting border warfare so superior to that of all his adversaries, that he was fast gaining the reputation which he was earning and meriting. The Butlers I had heard little of, except that they were active in the British interests. The elder Butler seemed more prominent than his equally infamous son, from the fact that he had formed a company of rangers, composed of Scotch retainers of the Johnsons and other woodsmen of the Adirondack region, clothed them in butternut colored suits, dubbed them Butler's Greens, and was at last accounts threatening his former friends and neighbors in the Mohawk valley. The Johnsons seemed patrons of his schemes, and I had little doubt but that they would take an active hand when the time came. Brant, too, made his headquarters with them when not out on his raids, and the whole coterie, with all their savage retainers, white and red, stood a constant menace to the very section which they should have protected, rather than have raided and scourged as they did. All of this I had heard in July, and had, as I have before said, wished to leave for the north then, but had resisted the temptation. Now, however, it was entirely different; I had nothing to keep me in Philadelphia; the best thing I could do in fact, was to get out of it as speedily as possible.

There were Tories constantly lurking about the region of Philadelphia northward, and I had heard

on good authority that they had a trick of passing the word when any patriots left the city for the north, that in the lonely regions along the borders of the two colonies, such patriots might be way-laid and murdered. The last man in from that region with furs, had declared that it was as much as any man's life was worth, to declare himself a Whig and then travel openly northward. "Indeed, sir!" he had said to me, "If the Tories didn't get him, the Injuns would, for they're killing everything wearing a scalp up that way, since the Butlers offered thirteen silver dollars for every Whig thatch."

This was why I had determined to leave at night and travel by night, for a week at least; and so, shaking hands with the Hornes and with Edith, at the hour of nine I left them standing there by the big gate, watching me as I trudged away through the moonlight out toward Callowhill and up the Wissahikon road. As I entered the first forest path, how changed everything seemed. Even the pack, already galling my shoulders, seemed to grow lighter. My gait of the city, changed to an Indian lope; my toes, ordinarily pointed outward as the regulars do for effect, now pointed in or straight ahead. My moccasined feet made no sound on the moist, soft earth, so unlike the dusty streets of the city. With head bared, body bent forward and every joint loose, I shambled on at a speed of fully five miles an hour wherever the trail was open. Once or twice, while going through the Paoli swamps, I saw round, firelike eyes following me, and was tempted to fire, for I was quite certain that a wolf or a panther was on my trail. However, I kept on, vowing I would not make noise unless attacked, and at day-

break was at least twenty-five miles on my way. I now turned aside, made for the denser forest, built a small fire of dry wood so as to make as little smoke as possible, and brewing my coffee, ate my frugal meal with great relish and all possible dispatch. Both Mrs. Horne and Edith had endeavored to persuade me to carry some of the many delicacies I had so enjoyed at our table, but I had steadfastly refused, preferring parched corn instead. A ten pound sack of this I had pounded and brought with me. Stirring a small handful of it into water, I could at any time make a hearty meal. It was a trick I had learned of the Indians, and it surprised me now to see how easily I took up with my old habits, and how good the mess tasted. As soon as I had brewed my coffee,—I had bolted my corn paste while waiting,—I cooled a little in my cup, swallowed it, put out my fire and started on for a yet more secluded spot, that I might sleep. I was careful to take my bearings before selecting my sleeping place, that I might the more readily strike the trail again when ready to set out.

My bed that first day, was on a little knoll, densely grown with pine scrub. Here in the faint light, I unrolled my pack to get my blanket, and within the roll found what I had not discovered when preparing my simple breakfast—Edith's picture. How happy I was! I lay there in the partial gloom for a long time, looking at the sweet face. I was sure that I could never have forgotten it, yet nevertheless, the picture with its lock of hair was my most precious possession. I fell asleep with the little case held close beneath my folded arms next to my heart, and when I awoke at four o'clock crawled out to the

stronger light to look at it again. Thank God for that little treasure.

When at twilight I found my way back to the trail, it was to hear voices, and a minute later I beheld two villainous looking Hessians—I could always tell a Hessian a mile off, even though he was not in uniform—riding back along the trail over which I had come the night before. I knew that they would never be woodsmen enough to notice my track, and so retiring to the deeper wood again, made my small fire in peace, prepared my paste, brewed my coffee and ate with it a piece of dried beef I had brought. After my long rest and this hearty meal I felt fresh again, and at dusk started out once more on my lonely way. I was now in a more thickly settled region, and four times before ten o'clock I passed houses in which were lights. One was evidently a roadside inn or tavern, as we have fallen into the habit of calling them since the war, and at this place the dogs barked, came out and followed me for a distance, and suspiciously sniffed at my heels. I marched on, prepared to shoot the dogs and take to the woods if men came out, but no one appeared, and all that night I hurried on. I was making across country for Shamokin Flats and not daring to ask my way or even study guide boards on the better trails by daylight, my task was a hard one. However, I reached the settlement the morning after the fifth night out, and having heard it was strongly patriot, walked boldly to the largest house of the neighborhood.

The man I accosted was gathering chips in his yard to start his morning fire, and did not see me until after I spoke. Then he sprang to his feet, much

startled and apparently ready to run. My smile reassured him, however, and he pointed out to me the Murphy residence, less than a half mile up the roadway. I did not inquire for Tim before I reached the doorway of this loghouse, out of which at my summons rolled an older edition of my whilom companion. At his heels were several younger Murphys, and all spoke, aye, even laughed with an Irish brogue more or less pronounced. As for Tim's father, his brogue was so rich that it sounded more like Tuscarora than English.

I need not dwell on my stay with these people, for my doings there are in no wise pertinent to my story, except that I learned the particulars of what I had vaguely heard—that Tim had “inlishted fer a sooger,” and was one of Morgan's riflemen, belonging to the detachment of Captain Long, now stationed somewhere north of Albany, N. Y., with Schuyler or Gates in command. I stopped but one day and a night, and then hurried on, arriving at Cook House on the Delaware, eight days thereafter. Here I determined to rest up a day or two. I found the old cabin which Murphy and I had used eighteen months before, in excellent condition, and was quite comfortable there. It had grown much cooler, and during my stay at this place copious rains relieved the terrible drouth that during that summer had parched all the forest south of the source of the Susquehanna. On the morning of the third day after I reached Cook House, I determined to strike out via Unadilla, the Charlotte and Schoharie countries, toward Albany. It was now the last of August, and I knew that Burgoyne from the Champlain region, and St. Leger and the Butlers and Johnsons



from the Owego route, must be drawing in toward that important post. I would have preferred going over into the Mohawk, but I was anxious to join Murphy, and as his people had been certain that he was somewhere above Albany, I must make for that region.

I arrived at the summit between the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers at noon, for I did not start at an early hour that day. I had nearly reached the brow of the hill, my old time lookout, when I was sure I heard voices. I stopped and listened. The faint sounds came from right over the divide, about where the trail ran down. Fearing the approach of an enemy, I left the trail and climbed the ledge, where Murphy and I had concealed ourselves that day Brant and Cornplanter came along. I had hardly settled behind the brush, when I heard the soft scuff of a moccasin on the rocky trail, and above the summit arose an Onondaga head. After came another, then another, and still others, until seven Indian bucks, all in war paint, had passed along. I watched them as they filed down the hill, and then fearing that they might discover my trail in the softer ground down nearer the Delaware, I bolted some of my meal paste, took a sip of water from the little rill where I mixed it and, under my pack, started on a run down the trail toward Okwaga. My pack was by this time so much lighter, that it was scarcely any incumbrance, and I ran well. I had not gone a mile, however, when I heard a faint shout behind me, and looking back saw five of the Indians I had evaded running down the hill toward me. I ran at my best speed now, and kept it up for two or three miles, until the gait began to tell on me and I saw that

some ruse must be adopted to throw them off the track.

Stretching away before me, was a long level piece of smooth, open, stony trail on which it would be impossible to detect a footprint. I ran well into this, and then sprang far to the left into the brush. Then I sank down and lay very still until I heard the heavy breathing of my pursuers as they ran by. I waited no longer than until they were out of hearing, then I arose and ran through the woods toward Okwaga mountain. From the side of the mountain, I could look back for miles toward the divide, and by familiar landmarks could trace the well-known trail running along through the valley, thence up along the side of the ridge, until it turned squarely to the south and wound over the divide and down to the Delaware. I had not lain there long, before I saw my five pursuers going back, single file, through a swamp glade a mile below. I caught a glimpse of them again as they climbed up the side hill and along over the divide. Then I worked my way around the mountain and looked down on the village, just across what was still the new river. The village had changed but little, except that it looked deserted, and I could see that only a small portion of the several hundred acres of cleared land, was in crop of any kind. Still, the fruit trees, of which there were at least a thousand of apple, were well loaded and were a pleasant sight to behold.

I sat for some time looking off down the rippling river with its pretty little islands far away to the west, and the wide stretches of Indian farm and orchard lands extending on either side to the rounded hills. Just beside the little brook I could see the In-

dian grave yard, and there beneath the daisies and clover, I knew that Owaimee lay quietly sleeping, safe in the arms of our common mother—Earth.

It was with solemn thoughts that I finally started to work back around the mountain to the place where the main trail led north, and at the last outlook I once more paused. The sun had settled well down toward the western horizon, and its slant rays clothed all the valley in beauteous splendor. Although I did not then know it, I was taking my last look at old Okwaga, for it was burned by an expedition under our own Colonel Butler the following summer. The scene was one of such quiet peace and charm that I shall never forget it.

As I came around the point of rock that juts out from the southwest side of the mountain, I naturally cast my eye toward the divide over which ran the trail to the Delaware. There was at that instant a flash as if the sinking sun were reflected from a mirror or some highly polished object. At that distance I could not tell what it was, but as it was moving along down the trail toward the south end of the mountain, I decided to lie in wait there and satisfy my curiosity, if I did not do more. Had I been higher up the mountain, when the flashing object came over the ridge, I could probably have told what it was, or at least what manner of creature bore it. I now hurried down toward the trail, using great caution, however, to avoid noise or movement of brush, lest some savage lurking in that vicinity might earn that bounty of my old neighbor Butler, by depriving me of my hair.

I had scarcely reached what seemed to me good concealment, when I heard the jingle of a sword

scabbard dragging over the rocky trail, and knew that a cavalcade of some sort was coming into view. An instant later, an unctuous burly buck in full war paint, trotted past. It was at his side that the sword was dangling and dragging, for the shortness of his legs did not prevent it striking the ground. It was on his fat breast, just above his round, full paunch, that a burnished silver plate shone,—a plate that was of no mortal use, except to ornament a strap, which, passing around over the shoulder, carried at its lower end a pistol case. That fine sword, that fancy plate, that pistol butt looked strangely familiar. Where had I seen it?

At that same breath my query was answered, for close behind the proud leader, came four bucks, two abreast; and between them, his arms bound at the wrists behind him, walked Captain Woolsey! At the hip of one buck, dangled a Delaware scalp and at the hips of two others, were three more scalps of white men, all freshly taken and yet bleeding.

## CHAPTER XVII

### ASTONISHMENT NOT THE PREDOMINATING EMOTION

**I**F ever a man was astonished in this world, it was I, when I recognized Captain Woolsey in the prisoner those five Onondaga bucks were so proudly conducting along the trail before me. How came he to be there? Had not he himself told me three weeks before, that he intended going south, to take command of a company to which he had been assigned? If he had gone south, surely he would not have been brought away up into New York, even if captured. Then too, it was plain that he was a recent captive. Was there not fresh blood on the side of his face, where he had received a slight wound of some kind? His elegant attire was freshly bedraggled and bemuddled. Those scalps—what of them? Three white scalps and one Delaware. It must be that he had been travelling north with an escort of white men and a Delaware guide. The party had been surprised and he captured. That was the most reasonable conjecture, and until I found a better, that must suffice. Now what was to be done? If I did not interfere, he stood a good show for a sudden, or a comparatively sudden, death. If the Butlers and Johnsons were paying \$13 a piece for Whig scalps, he would probably lose his. It might be that the savages hoped to

get a larger price for an American officer alive, than for the scalp of a dead one; or it might be that they were reserving him for torture at some main camp up along the river, and would take his scalp after having exhausted all their hellish ingenuity in torture. At all events, if he was to be liberated, it must be done before the larger party was come up with. I would follow on for a few miles and watch my chances.

I crept from my concealment, just as the party disappeared from sight in the first bend of the trail, and treading as lightly as I could, began trotting after. When I reached the first bend, they were out of sight, beyond another. It was fully thirty minutes before I caught sight of them again, and when I did so, twilight was giving place to darkness. If the main party were not near, I knew these five must soon go into camp, and I followed as closely as I dared, that they might not leave the trail, seeking a safer camping place, and I lose them. Soon the trail led down toward the river, and as they came out along the bank, I caught sight of them, a considerable distance ahead. By the light reflected from the water, I could now see them quite plainly. There were yet five Indians and a white man. They were making up stream, and I hastened after. A little later, I thought I heard voices off to the right and stopped, but as I heard nothing further in that direction, concluded I must have been mistaken, and I took up my stealthy march again. It had now grown quite dark. After a time I stopped again and listened, but could hear nothing save the gurgle of the water along the reedy shore, the chirp of insects, and the myriad night cries of the forest. As

I started on, I found myself in a swale, setting back from the river. Had they crossed it, I knew that they must have left a broad trail, for the ground was soft and mucky, even at this dry season. I retreated to the edge of this swale, laid down my rifle, and drew my flint and steel, that I might make a light and examine the ground. A wisp of dried fern made me a small torch, and with this I looked carefully across the swale, but not a footprint did I find. It must be that the party had either crossed the river, or turned to the right. Throwing down my torch and stamping upon it, I made my way back to the place where I had left my rifle. When I reached it, I groped about, but the rifle was not there. Surely, this was where I had left it? Still, I might be mistaken. I would light another wisp and see. I gathered the fern and struck my flint, when instead of flame, there was a blinding flash, shooting stars, a crushing blow, and I fell prone to the earth.

I did not quite lose my senses, but I was dazed, and before I could move or arise, my hands were bound and I was roughly pulled to my feet. Bewildered, hardly conscious of what I was doing, I next stumbled along a narrower trail leading back from the river, and within five minutes came to a small clearing, in the centre of which stood a cabin. Through the open door and the numerous cracks between the logs, shone firelight. As we entered, there was an exclamation of genuine surprise from those within, and it was then that I understood that a second party and not the captors of Woolsey, had made me prisoner. There were seven in this new party, and they were not Onondagas, but Senecas. The two parties had evidently met on the trail some

time before or at this cabin, which was a rendezvous for all Indians passing that way. It was undoubtedly their greetings which I had heard, just as darkness came on.

One of the seven had recognized me, and as we entered proudly exclaimed: "Quedar! Skenando's Quedar! Captain Butler pay heap big price!"

"If you want to carry a decent scalp to Captain Butler, wash up my head and get this blood out of my hair," said I in Seneca. At the sound of my voice Captain Woolsey, who seemed to have been asleep when we entered, roused up.

"Great Heavens, Ehleron! Is this you? How came you here?"

"Great Heavens, Captain! Is this *you*? How came *you* here?"

One of the Indians grunted at my reply, and from the amused look on his painted visage, I was quite sure he understood English and sensed what little humor there was in my reply. I therefore addressed him. "Where'd you get this fellow?"

The Indian grunted again, but shook his head to signify he did not understand me. I repeated my question in Seneca, when he answered that the capture had been made somewhere near the Delaware, a distance north of Cook House. He was very reticent, however, and I fell to questioning the captain again. He made evasive answers, and finally asked me, "Where, and when, are we likely to be exchanged?"

"Exchanged! you poor fool!" said I in disgust. "You and I will probably be scalped, and then roasted, as soon as these people reach the main party. From all I can hear, the Butlers haven't been ex-



changing prisoners right along as you may think. What were you doing up in these woods, anyhow?"

"Why! I—I changed my mind and came up here instead of going south. That's all!" said the captain looking very foolish.

"Yes! So I see! But where were you captured, Captain; and when did you leave Philadelphia?"

"I left there a week after you did. I was to have gone on with Arnold,—or rather I had hoped to have gone with him." Here the captain paused, realizing again that he had made a bad trip, and that I knew him for what he was—a liar.

"Captain! Don't beat about the bush. I don't care if you did lie to me in Philadelphia. I'm not going to inquire into that now. All I question you for is to know what our chances are. Where is this party from? Do you know where the main party is?"

"All I know is this, Mr. Ehlerson. I was coming up from the Delaware country with three of Arnold's men and a Delaware guide, when we heard that a large war party was out north of us. We left our chosen route at a place called Cook House, I think it was, at an early hour this morning, and struck out over toward the Susquehanna, hoping by the detour to avoid it. Instead, we ran into a detachment of it and were surrounded. We surrendered, supposing we were surrounded by a larger party, when four rifles cracked and my four companions were shot down. Why I was spared I don't know."

"Your uniform saved you, Captain. They can get more for you than they could for an ordinary scalp. They will take you to Butler's camp, get a

double reward,—probably twice what they could for your scalp, and then by Butler's orders, you will be turned over for torture."

"Do you think so?" and the poor wretch trembled from head to foot, while a ghastly pallor came about his mouth and slowly covered his face.

"Certainly! I know it. As for me—I am also wanted for particular purposes. Butler wants to torture me for killing a number of his Mississague trackers, and for saving a pretty little squaw from falling into his hands, a year ago last spring."

The captain groaned, and laid down upon his mat again as if very sick at the stomach. The Indian that had grunted, now looked at me, his eyes shining with delight, and in a low voice remarked: "Words kill all white offser's courage. Him no run gant-let well."

"Eh! What's that you said?" I inquired, for he had surely said something that sounded very like what I have just stated, and that in English, too. He evidently realized that he had forgotten his rôle, and as I had luckily asked him to repeat his words as a man sometimes will when suddenly addressed, even though he may have heard, the buck now believed that I had not noticed his lapse, and in Seneca said again what I was quite sure he had said in English. Any way, I was sure that he understood English, and was thereafter very careful what I said to the captain. I had intended telling the captain of a plan which I had formulated for our escape, but feeling certain that at least one of the party understood English, I now forbore. I could see by the manner in which they treated him that they did not fear the captain's escape. He was indeed anything

but a woodsman, and had he been given his liberty, could hardly have made his way to the settlements alone. Then, too, these savages, who were of Little Beard's "hearteating clan," very sagacious as well as fierce, had noted his lack of nerve as evidenced by his white face and his groanings.

However, that suited me exactly, for my plan was to have him make as much fuss as possible, so when the Indian I suspected of understanding English left us for an instant, I whispered to the captain, "Make out as sick as you can. Make 'em think you're half dead. Then they won't be so apt to tie your hands. Be sure you keep awake, too." The captain needed no urging. His groans came easily enough, and his pallor came quite as easily, when he thought, as I often caused him to do, of the horrors of the stake. As for me, I called for my supper, ate it with a relish, for I was very hungry, and commanding that my head be dressed, growled and used strong language while they were working over me. I had been hit with one of those old fashioned Seneca war clubs, such as the squaws use to put the quietus on the larger dogs destined for a feast, and had my skull not been an exceedingly hard one, it must have been cracked by the blow. After the wound had been dressed, I laid back as if very weary, which indeed I was, and soon my snores should have convinced any one that I was asleep. I was not, however, and through my eyelashes saw the eyes of the captain very wide open.

Meanwhile, the Indians one after another had dropped off, and all seemed sleeping. Two of them had not lain down, but sat up, one on either side of the cabin door as a guard. The seven who brought

me in, had not slept the night before, as I gathered from their conversation. The five bringing in the captain, had found in his luggage a three pint bottle of his favorite rum,—not a child's tippie by any means,—and having drank that, were pretty nearly comatose. If there is anything that will make a buck sleepy, it is a good drink of rum on an empty stomach with a full meal after. I have seen them thus treated, fall asleep standing upright. These were no exception to the general rule, and soon all slept, several snoring even louder than I. I was bound hand and foot. My hands were behind my back. I was lying between two braves and a cord wound several times around my body, was also around theirs. It did seem as if there was small chance for me. However, I snored at intervals, simulated sleep, and hoped. Once I came near falling asleep in spite of myself.

It must have been nearly eleven o'clock, when I ventured to whisper to the captain, who lay about four feet from me. His arms were bound at the elbows, but not at the wrists and elbows as were mine. I was quite sure that he could use his hands if he would. As I whispered, he looked at me, and I instructed him as best I could, how to steal the knife of an Indian lying next him, cut his own bonds and liberate me by cutting mine. Much to my disgust, he turned whiter than he had been before, shook his head despairingly, and closed his eyes. This cowardice rendered me furious. I began to entreat him in whispers. He lay with closed eyes and paid no attention to me. Then I went wild and began to swear. It was fearfully hot in that shack. The Indians had dropped asleep leaving a large fire

of maple and beech, and the coals of this gave out a strong heat, something after the manner of the coal they burn in Philadelphia. The bodies of all those greasy painted savages, under the influence of this warmth, smelled far from savory. The pain of my broken head, my horribly uncomfortable position—I was lying on my crossed arms—and my anger, all combined to put me in a terrible state. I was fast growing delirious, when I heard a peculiar “cheep!” just outside the cabin door. Opening my eyes wide, I glared eagerly around. That call I should have known anywhere. How many times had I heard it when Skenando and I, together, were endeavoring to stalk a deer or were circling around a tree in which a panther had taken refuge. By a painful effort I raised my head a trifle and looked out through the door. I could see nothing but darkness, for the moon was not yet arisen. I was about settling back, believing the sound I had heard, one of the incidents of my overwrought nerves, when out from the shadows stepped a familiar form, and I knew that Skenando was in the flesh and with me. Just behind him I descried another familiar figure, and I could have shouted for joy. It was my Indian “bosom friend,” Hon Yerry. Even as the Mohawks select a brother, so had this young Oneida and I, three years before, sworn fealty to one another. I knew now, that if his life paid the forfeit, whatever mortal hands could do, would be done in my behalf.

As I strained to raise my head and look out again, the young Oneida motioned to me to lie down. Then hatchet in hand, he slowly tiptoed his way among the sleepers and across the cabin, where all but two of

the guns sat. He had passed the sleeping sentinels at either side of the door, and was gliding toward the gun stack in the corner, when to my horror, the sentinel at the left opened his eyes, winked once or twice as if to assure himself that he was not dreaming, and then with a slow, steady motion, although his body trembled with such excitement as a cat shows when about to spring, raised his rifle to shoot Hon Yerry in the back. I tried to speak, to warn my Oneida brother, but it seemed as if my lips had become flaccid and inert, as if all my organs of speech were paralyzed.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### LOOSENED BONDS

**T**HERE are times, when an instant seems an age. Upon such occasions one wonders at the swiftness, and again at the slowness, of thought. As I lay there helpless in that cabin that night, and watched that painted fiend slowly raising a rifle to shoot my Indian brother in the back, it seemed as if every second was an age. As a matter of fact, it was not three seconds from the time that I attempted to speak a warning until there was no necessity for it. I have seen lightning-like movements in my time, but never have I seen, before or since, such quickness and dexterity as old Skenando displayed at this juncture. He had stood close beside the door, a little to the right, when the sentinel awoke. At first the old man seemed paralyzed even as I was, but horror did not hold him long. He sprang without gathering, and landed light as a cat at the sentinel's side. His hand flew to the wind-pipe of the intent savage, there were two quick knife thrusts of the other hand—and the tremor of eagerness had mingled with that of death, for each thrust touched at the very seat of life. Slowly, almost pityingly it seemed, Skenando bent over and peered into the eyes of his victim; then gently laid him down beside his sleeping tribesmen. He still retained his hold upon his rifle and Skenando his upon

his throat. As the rifle finally slid from the palsied hands, Skenando caught it, stood over him an instant as if to make sure that his struggles were ended, and then cautiously tiptoed outside, where he leaned the rifle against the door post and, knife in hand, stood as he had ten seconds before, immovable and calm, the firelight flickering on his grim old face and gleaming in his bright old eyes. Not a muscle of all the ridged, cordy net-work twitched or trembled. The nerve of this terrible old man was that of one in a thousand.

So quickly and silently had it all been done, that Hon Yerry had not even heard or surmised the tragedy at his back, and it was not until he turned with the rifles in his arms,—he had taken mine and the captain's,—that he realized what had occurred. He must then have understood the terrible danger which he had escaped, but he made no sign of agitation or surprise. Instead, he carefully picked his way out. I held my breath as he went and trembled with nervous terror. Once, just after he had passed through the door, the savage next me grunted in his sleep and rolled partly over, pulling yet tighter the cords that bound me to him and his fellow; whereat, the second savage raised his head, growled sleepily and settled back again, just in time to save his own life, for like a shadow Skenando had darted in and bent over him, that terrible knife in hand.

All this time Captain Woolsey had lain with terror-distended eyes, and trembling worse than I—whether from terror or eagerness, I could not say. As Hon Yerry reentered the cabin, Skenando sheathed his knife and raised his right hand; a tomahawk flashed in the firelight as it was tossed from



Hon Yerry's hand to that of Skenando, and, drawing his own blade, the half naked young warrior stepped lightly between the sleeping forms to bend over me. It seemed as if that quick cautious knife stroke released all the pent-up blood of my system, and I knew that I was free. I dared not move for fully five minutes, so benumbed were my body and limbs, and as silently as he had come did the lithe-limbed young Indian make his way outside the cabin again. Before going, he picked up a hatchet and handed it to me. There I lay waiting, gripping the weapon, fully resolved if discovered, to bound to my feet, brain all that opposed me and make a rush for the door. Happily, my fears were needless. Every son of a squaw slept almost as soundly as the victim of Skenando, and emboldened by the deep breathing, I finally arose, stood unsteadily on my feet a moment, and then with three long strides had gained the outer freedom. There I recovered fast, and soon reentered to stand with Skenando in the center of the cabin, hatchet ready, while Hon Yerry cut the bonds of the captain and assisted him to his feet.

It was then that I was loath to leave. Something within me seemed to command me to kill those sleepers, one after another, with the silent hatchet, but a look from Skenando, an imperative motion to get out of the door, started me, and I obeyed. As we went out, Skenando paused and dexterously lifted the scalp of the Seneca he had slain. Then, while I stood ready with my big knife in my right hand and my left ready to shut on the sleeper's throat, Skenando carefully lifted the rifle from between the sleeping guard's knees. Having accomplished this, I felt again that uncontrollable desire to slay the

whole party, but Skenando would not entertain the notion for an instant. He at once assumed the command, as he always had when I was with him, and since Hon Yerry and the captain seemed inclined to obey without a murmur, I had no choice but to do the same.

The cabin had been so crowded that my pack had been left outside with several blankets and other implements, not including Captain Woolsey's sword, belt and pistol, however. That rig, the new owner was sleeping in. I therefore slipped into my pack straps, motioned the captain to take a blanket and a small sack of parched corn lying near, and each carrying three guns and several knives and hatchets, we set out for the river. A considerable distance up the river we stopped, and one after another threw the surplus of weapons far out into the water. Then in the deep darkness we took the broad trail and hurried north. Within an hour, the moon came up and at daylight of September 1st, we had made nearly twenty miles, being at least three miles northeast of Unadilla. We knew that there must be two large and hostile parties in and about the headwaters of the Delaware and Susquehanna, for how else could we have run into two detachments from two different tribes? And we knew also that as soon as our escape was discovered, runners from the party we had left would be dispatched to the main parties for arms and help, and that we would be pursued at once. That was why we took but little sleep that morning. I was in favor of pushing on without any sleep at all, but Captain Woolsey was so near dead that he could not keep up. Besides, Skenando and Hon Yerry were certain that our escape would not

be discovered for some hours, that several more hours would be wasted in securing arms and help, and that the actual pursuit would not be instituted until nearly or quite noon.

We therefore took little pains to conceal our trail, but hurried on through the night, and were, as I have said, three miles northeast of Unadilla when daylight came upon us. Each of us had carried two guns, and as my own was the splendid double barrel which Miss Molly had given me so long ago, we had nine shots at our immediate disposal if attacked. The only thing to guard against was a surprise, and that we would not allow, if vigilance could prevent it. We crossed to the northwest bank of the Susquehanna, just above Unadilla and travelled for miles along the side hill. When daylight came, we were within a half mile of a small densely wooded island. Skenando was leading, and much to my surprise, as we sighted this island he broke from the trail toward the river, and, making as much trace as possible, entered the water and made for the other shore. I followed, and, at the bidding of the Oneidas, both the captain and I left plain tracks on either bank, both where we entered and left the water. Then, we all followed Skenando, who, wallowing through the brush, made for a huge tree trunk lying partly in and partly out of the water and extending in shore nearly one hundred feet. Onto this he climbed and running along it to its stump, sprang far in shore, making a plain trail by kicking up the moss and leaves. All followed his example, and all stood and watched him as he picked his way carefully back to the tree trunk by a circuitous route, this time leaving no trail. We did the same, and, single file, made our

way out the tree trunk, back toward the water again. Once in the water, we waded rapidly up stream to a point opposite the island, and there swam across. The captain was but a poor swimmer, and I had to go back after him and his burden of rifles. On this island, we found plenty of dry wood, and as it was hardly yet light, ventured to build a small fire, boil coffee and dry our wet clothing, which in the early morning of even that hot season felt uncomfortable. We did not allow this fire which was of smokeless dry wood to burn very long, for fear that the slight smoke it did make might be seen, and about six o'clock, just as the sun was commencing to peer into the valley, all save Skenando sought repose. It was arranged that he and Hon Yerry were to stand on guard two hours each, for as they had done little but lurk about the woods in the vicinity of Okwaga for several days, they were not as much worn as the captain and I, and could do with less sleep.

On the way up, despite our rapid travel, Hon Yerry had told me much news. From him I learned of the terrible struggle at Oriskany three weeks before; of how the Butlers and Johnsons and their Tory allies, together with such Indians as they could gather, were lurking about the more exposed border, murdering men, women or children as the opportunity offered; of the death of brave old General Nick Herkimer from his wound at Oriskany; and of Burgoyne's advance down through the Champlain country toward Albany, even though his ally St. Leger had been repulsed and driven back via the Oswego route. In short, I heard more news of the northern New York country than I had before since I left it, and was so excited that, tired as I was, it

was only by an effort that I wooed and gained slumber.

It was to dream of all that I had heard that I fell asleep that morning—for a strange panorama came to me during that heavy slumber. It was as if I saw it all just as Hon Yerry had told me; as if I was a spectator of those stirring scenes. Then other and new scenes came. I was myself fighting fiercely,—first shooting at a distance; then hatchet in hand, struggling to beat back red-coats who came at me faster than I could cut them down. However, I had in part succeeded; they were falling before me; were finally fleeing, when I paused in pursuit and glanced back over my left shoulder, to see Captain Woolsey, a murderous scowl of hate and rage on his face. Where he had come from so suddenly I could not imagine; for he had not gone with me into the struggle which I had been engaged in. But there he was now, holding in his hands a pistol and his eyes gleamed wickedly as he drew it up and aimed it at me. I was looking into the barrel, expecting to see fire flash from it, for I could see his forefinger pressing the trigger, when Murphy sprang from behind a tree, hurled himself against him and knocked the weapon upwards, just as it was discharged. The report seemed so close and so much louder than any other I had heard in all that fearful fight, that I was stunned, and, as I sank down saw Edith's dear face, a look of wild terror upon it. I awoke with a moan and a start, to find Hon Yerry crouched near a drift thirty feet distant, a smoking rifle in his hands. On the edge of the river, two hundred yards below, and

near the tree on which we had entered the water, floated an Indian. His dying struggles caused him to go round and round, like a badly wounded duck. As I watched him I saw a slight movement in the brush just below the tree, there was another report from the point of the island sixty yards below, and headlong from the brush, leaping like a great frog, came an Onondaga buck, to fall face down with a heavy splash into the swift running river.

As the smoke floated away and the reports ceased echoing up and down the silent valley, the drowsy hum of insect and river life again held sway; the shining circles of the eddies that had been created by the splash, lost themselves in the reeds along the shore; the river ran on as before, and but for the glistening backs of the two dead Indians lying there near the water's edge, I might have thought that too a dream. Certainly, it had not been at first, nor did it now seem, more real than the other. The two rifle shots had not entirely awakened Captain Woolsey, who lay some distance in toward the centre of the island, a blanket over his face to keep off the sun and insects. He moved just as I looked, and in so doing drew down the blanket. There he lay, as handsome a young fellow as ever I saw; he certainly looked like anything but a murderer, and yet—what expression was that coming? What a horrible scowl! Was it the sun? No. There was murder in that leer, which drew his lips away from his set teeth. He reached down, snatched as if at a pistol and having gone through the motions of cocking it with his thumb raised his hand and jerked his forefinger. Then a smile of satisfaction covered his face, and he was once more handsome and sleep-

ing like a babe. I now felt an aversion for him, a fear of him, that all his lies and duplicity had never before created. Pshaw! This was childish! I must awaken him. Neither Skenando nor Hon Yerry paid me the least attention as I crawled up the slope and shook him until he sat up.

"Is it—is the fight—is it morning?" he stammered. Then he stretched his arms and yawned, looking for an instant foolish as he remarked: "By Jove! I was dreaming."

"That so? Hear any shooting, Captain? Skenando and Hon Yerry have just killed an Indian each. We ought to get out of this I'm thinking, so you'd better get awake and be ready."

"They have! Queer I didn't hear 'em shoot. Where are they? Oh! I see. We're followed, eh? Gad! But those fellows are dead shots."

"Yes they are, Captain. But what were you dreaming of? You kicked about here as if in a nightmare. Having a fight, were you?"

The captain looked startled; even more than he had when I told him of the exploit of our companions. "Why, yes. I was in some infernal close place or other. What'd I say?"

"Who'd you kill, Captain?"

"I—I—Oh! Don't bother me, confound you!"

"Did you dream you had a pistol in your hands, Captain? Did you see me in your battle?"

A look of guilty fear flashed across his face. Then by an effort he laughed. "Oh, let up, won't you? Didn't you ever have a nightmare? I'm not going to tell you my dreams. I was in close quarters—I know that."

Despite my desire to question him further, I was

too much interested in the actual events transpiring about us, to dwell long on the similarity of dreams. I therefore said no more, but securing my own rifle and another, crawled on my hands and knees to the drift wood, behind which Hon Yerry was crouching. He paid no attention to me, but sat with his eyes fixed on the shore below. The captain soon crept down there too, and for more than an hour we all sat there patiently waiting. It was my opinion that the savages killed were two of the disarmed ones who had been sent on to locate us, while the others went to the main body for help and equipment; but as we were not sure, as there might be a score of sharpshooters hid in the forest on either side, ready to shoot as soon as we showed ourselves, caution was imperative. One, the struggling Indian, had been carried by the current down against the tree top and lay there half out the water, his arms and legs moving back and forth as the current willed. It was not a pleasant sight. The other had fallen face down and been swept into such shallow water that his shoulders and back showed. His body made no movement except to rise and fall a little with the surge that smote the shore. I knew that the Oneidas greatly desired these scalps, and that as soon as they thought it prudent they would secure them. I therefore said nothing, but awaited their motion. Finally Hon Yerry handed me his rifle, drew his knife and stealthily slid into the river. Then slowly and noiselessly he swept down with the current, his scalplock scarcely showing, and without exposing more than an arm and his head deftly secured the first scalp, then the other. Like a snake he crawled up the bank beside the second Indian into the brush



and was seen no more until he appeared on the bank opposite the head of the island, and as skillfully as before floated down and across to us. He gave one trophy to Skenando, and proudly attached the other to his own wet girdle.

We were now quite sure that the two Indians just shot had been sent on alone, and determined to take up our journey again and make for the Schoharie. We felt it safest to push up the main river another day and strike across for Schoharie above the Charlotte. It was a hard march, those next forty miles, but we knew that the quicker it was made the better would be our chances for reaching Albany. We prepared our corn paste, ate a considerable quantity of it, snatched a few handfuls of blackberries and huckleberries from the brush on the island and making shore, hurried along the trail all that afternoon. At nightfall we had reached the Charlotte, and even though it was dark, we here left the trail and travelled up the bed of the little river, sometimes stumbling over shoals, at other times in water quite to our arm-pits. As soon as the moon came up, which it did a little after midnight, we again took the trail, which came down to the river ten miles from its mouth, and at daylight had made such good progress that we could hear a dog barking at a cabin near what was later known as Scrooge's Grist Mill. It was nearly six o'clock, when we finally reached this mill, and here a horrible sight presented itself.

A little way out from the mill lay the body of a boy of about twelve years of age. He had been scalped and mutilated in an indescribable manner. Nearer the mill was the body of a woman—the boy's mother. She had been scalped and mutilated. A

piece of child's dress was clutched in her hand. She had apparently clung to her child to the last. The body of the child,—we could tell it by the dress—a baby not more than eighteen months old, was impaled on a sharp-topped fence stake near by. An old man had been cut down probably while trying to defend the children and the woman. He had been literally hacked to pieces. In the mill near his own flood-gate lay the body of the miller. He had evidently been shot down while at his work the day before. The mill had been fired, but a shower of rain had put the fire out and the greater portion of the building stood until it was rebuilt. In an out-house near by, was the body of a Dutch domestic, scalped but not mutilated. The miller's residence had been burned.

We surveyed this scene of rapine and murder for a few minutes only. It was a dangerous neighborhood and we dared not stay even long enough to bury the dead. We were about to take up our march again, when there was a slight rustle in the long grass near the road, and I caught a glimpse of a child's head. I sprang over in that direction and came near to alighting on a pretty little boy of five who was crying piteously. A great lump arose in my throat and I was almost sobbing as I picked the child up. I kissed him and he put his chubby arms about my neck and nestled in my bosom, glancing fearfully meanwhile at my Indian companions. Skenando handed him a piece of dried meat and he ate it as a famished dog might. Then we questioned him and ascertained that he was the only survivor; that Indians led by white men had done this hellish work early on the morning of the day before. As he had

eaten nothing but berries and currants I made a saddle for him on my pack, filled his hands full of dried meat and as he ate we hurried on. We had no sooner started than we heard the barking of a dog again, this time behind us. The child declared his folks had not had a dog. What dog it was that barked, why he did not show himself, and whether or not it was an Indian attempt to lead us into ambush, I do not to this day know.

We reached the Schoharie settlements—Bartholomew's place was deserted—late that night and rested there twelve hours. I left the child with a relative, near the site of the Upper fort. When we reached Gates's army near the mouth of the Mohawk, some ten miles above Albany, Murphy was off on a scout, but he returned the same night that I arrived, and was overjoyed to see me. Skenando and Hon Yerry reported to the new general as the former commander had instructed, but were so coolly treated, that had not Arnold interfered not only the old chief and the young one, but from one hundred to one hundred and fifty Oneidas as well, might have left the American service. Happily Arnold had tact enough to hold them and to placate the enmity Gates's boorishness had aroused. The following day the army moved on north to Stillwater, taking possession of Bemus Heights on the west bank of the Hudson. Here, while daily and hourly increasing by accessions from all directions, lay that heterogeneous body of men, panting to do to Burgoyne what Herkimer and his Mohawk Dutchmen had done to St. Leger and the Johnsons and Butlers at Oriskany five or six weeks before.

## CHAPTER XIX

### DISGUISE AND DANGER

**I** CANNOT relate anything of the first battle of Stillwater, or Bemus Heights, except by hearsay, for the reason that from the 14th to the 22d of September, I was in the region south of Albany on a scouting expedition. On this trip, which I accomplished alone in the disguise of a Dutch farmer, I had many narrow escapes, but no adventures worth relating. I had been sent out through the influence of Murphy, who seemed a leading spirit in Colonel Morgan's command.

Briefly, the situation was this. Burgoyne had swept down from the north by the Champlain route, confident of success, until Stark took the conceit out of him at Bennington. In fact, prior to this, he had all along been boasting that with an army of ten thousand he could march from the St. Lawrence to the Carolinas; and he the world's best military authority. It merely shows how little the British knew of the mettle of our farmers and backwoodsmen. He had nearly or quite that force when Stark tackled Baume's men, but he knew from that time forward that he had underrated the spirit if not the number of his adversaries. Then followed the first battle of Stillwater or Bemus Heights, and while it was called a draw, Burgoyne lost more than we did,

and within the next few weeks lost twice as many more from desertion.

Of the second battle of Bemus Heights I am able to speak more authoritatively, however. For two days before the battle of October 7th, we had been longing for it, but could not draw the enemy on. Burgoyne was evidently awaiting reinforcements from the north, or a co-operative movement from Clinton at the south, and Gates was either too cautious or too slothful to attack him. Even before the first battle of September 19th, both sides had thrown up certain rude defenses, but during the three weeks following, these had been increased and made stronger until now ours, at least, seemed well nigh impregnable. To the entreaties of Arnold and Morgan, made soon after the first engagement, Gates made reply that he had been placed there to check Burgoyne's advance on Albany and not to do more. Thus matters stood.

As I sat talking with Murphy on the morning of October 6th, we saw Arnold and Morgan in close conversation. Soon an orderly summoned Murphy, and from where I sat I could see the three in conference. The two small, dark men—Arnold and Murphy, seemed talking at the big blonde, Colonel Morgan, and he with folded arms and sober face, seemed listening as if half convinced, yet in doubt. Finally he turned and looked toward me, then nodded and Murphy started on a swift run. As he neared me, he beckoned excitedly and as I hastened to meet him, exclaimed in a low, cautious tone: "Ye've me to thank, ye Dutch omadhoun. It's another fine job I have for ye. Git yer owld rifle now an' take yer silf over to the kurnel's tint.

He's a job fer ye that'll make ye the most conspishus man in the army or I lose my guess."

"Conspicuous you mean, Tim?"

"Divil a bit o' difference does it make me bye. Don't stand there a chewin' on worruds. Its *deeds* ye be havin' the fine chance at. Hustle along wid ye now."

I secured my rifle and went with him to the colonel's tent, in which I found the colonel with Arnold, who seemed almost as much excited as Murphy. "Come on in, Tim," called out the big colonel kindly as Murphy hesitated at the door. Murphy entered, and we both stood waiting while the officers pursued a confidential conversation in a low tone, meanwhile looking me over.

"And so you're this man Ehleron I persuaded General Gates to send south the other day?"

I bowed, saluted, and said nothing.

"Murphy tells us that you can talk German?"

"Yes, sir. Low Dutch. I speak it passably."

"Could you play the part of a Dutch farmer, do you think?"

"Yes, sir. I think I could. I was brought up by one. That was the character I assumed when down the river, and it passed."

"Well! The idea is this: We want to bring on an action here. Certain of the officers, including myself, have a plan by which we think it can be done, but you must promise us on your sacred word of honor, that no matter whether you succeed or fail, you will not tell a soul that we sent you?"

"I do promise, sir, and my word is as good as any oath I can take, for I would die at the stake before I would break it."

“All right. I believe you and I hope you will come out of this safely, for you are too fine a man to die yet. I believe from what I saw of you in a scuffle with the boys out here the other day, that you are by far the strongest and quickest man in the army, and Murphy tells me that you are also as quick of wit as any in our force too.”

“I thank my friend Murphy for his recommendation, and you for believing him, sir. I will try and prove your opinion just if you give me the opportunity.”

“I’ve no doubt you will, Ehlerson; and now listen, while I outline your work. You are to get out of camp to-night, make the rear of Burgoyne’s army and enter his camp as a refugee from up the Mohawk. You have been ill treated by our men in search of recruits, and you want to get where you can get even. You have important information that you overheard, while the Americans were eating at your house, which information is to the effect, that about two o’clock in the afternoon to-morrow, Burgoyne is to be attacked by my men. I will have some of my men out here in the woods along the hill back of Freeman’s farm at that hour, and to make your story seem plausible they will be dodging about among the trees. These you are to point out and get the enemy to fire on if possible. We dare not fire first, you know, for General Gates has forbidden it. You see our idea is that if we can open an engagement, Burgoyne can be captured, but General Gates thinks not, and will wait until Clinton comes up and harasses our rear, unless something is done. You are to further talk with the German or Hessian troops as much as you

can and the burden of your song is to be, that while you hate the Americans and regret to see it, you must admit from what you have been able to learn, that three hundred Hessian deserters have within the past three weeks come to the American camp. They have been well received and are far better off than those remaining will be if Burgoyne's army is captured, as it is the intention of the Americans to treat all prisoners in a way that shall retaliate for British treatment of Americans. Having done this, you may be compelled to enlist in order to get where you can talk—you must watch your opportunity and escape. If you succeed in bringing on an engagement, use your own judgment about going into a fight on that side. However, if you are compelled to do so, have no fear. Every one of Morgan's riflemen will be instructed, as soon as the battle commences, not to fire at a big man with a white bandage about his head. I think that is all; and now my lad, I wish you success in this desperate venture and a safe return. Did we not deem it necessary, you may be sure we would not send you on this hazardous expedition. Good luck and good-bye!"

As I shook hands with the big Virginian, looked into his moist eyes and saw the workings of his face, I realized what a lover of good men he was. I remember too, that General Arnold was much affected, but both he and Murphy seemed to take a more sanguine view of things, than did big tender-hearted Morgan, and while I am sure neither could have been braver, both certainly showed less concern. In company with Murphy, I left the two officers talking, and went to our tent to prepare for the trip.



With Murphy's aid I now secured an old leather bonnet, such as Sir William's Scotch and Palatine help used to wear about the Hall farm, a suit of gray homespun and woven woolen, consisting of knee breeches, shirt and overshirt, the latter worn loose outside my belt. In the belt was as large a knife as I could find an excuse for carrying—a young sword, Murphy called it—and from one of our companions, Murphy borrowed an antique Dutch pistol, carrying a ball as large as the end of my great toe. This weapon had been found in a deserted farm house up back of Schoharie, by the lender, some weeks before, and while it was nearer a cannon than a pistol and of little actual use, it went well with my disguise and character. By the time this outfit had been collected, it was three o'clock and I lay down to think a bit. I can always think best when lying on my back and so remained in that position until darkness came on. Then I called Murphy in and bade him good-bye. He was very anxious to know my plans, but as I had been unable to think any out, I was obliged to tell him so, and to depart without any definite course in mind.

I made a wide detour over back of the divide and at midnight found myself well to the rear of Burgoyne's lines. Here, in a small clearing, I found a cabin, a sheep fold, and a barn of hay. I knew the country well, having hunted deer over it when a boy, and was confident that I was not more than five or six miles from Burgoyne's western abatis. The sight of those sheep put an idea into my head. I went to the corner of the fold, pulled a log to one side—something few men and none but the largest sized bear could have done—and catching a fat

wether slung it on my back and made for the woods. I was careful to make the break in the fold look as much like bear work as possible, and as the grass was thick about there, knew that I had not left any trail that would betray me. Carrying the sheep to the very top of the divide, I killed it with my knife and dressed it as neatly as I could, by the early morning light. Then having carefully hidden all traces of the butchery and eaten my breakfast, I shouldered the carcass about eight o'clock and made straight for the rear of the British lines. Owing to my burden and the difficulty of making my way down through the woods, it was fully eleven o'clock before I got near enough to be halted by the first British picket. He presented his gun and demanded the countersign, whereat, in as blundering a fashion as I could assume, I began telling him a long rambling story in mixed Dutch and English, interspersed liberally with Dutch oaths and curses on the thievish continentals. I pretended ignorance of all that was said to me, and struggled wildly to impress him with my desire to sell my mutton and enlist to fight the Yankees.

A crowd soon collected around me and escorted by a score of jeering red-coats, I made my way to that position of the line occupied by Riedesel and his Hessians. For some reason or another, it was some time before the Hessian commander could see me, and there for nearly two hours I remained, keeping a fast hold on my sheep, which the teasing regulars kept trying to get away from me. To all their chaff, I turned a deaf ear, so long as they spoke to me or of me in English, but to every Hessian that came near, I told in excited sputtering Dutch, a story of

my wrongs at the hands of the Americans, and vowed that I wanted a gun, a sword and a uniform, in exchange for this, the last sheep the thieving Americans had left me. I was uneasy, as my wanderings brought me near the Tory quarters, lest some refugee from the Mohawk valley recognize me and so managed to make toward the tents of the regulars again. Here I met the very danger I had avoided elsewhere and in this manner :

I was just finishing my story for the twentieth time, when I heard a voice I well knew and as I half turned to look, beheld Sheriff White, the man I had knocked down and run away from, at the time of the murder of my uncle, three years and three months before. Fortunately, I recognized him in time to collect my wits, and did not pay any attention to him as he came up to within six feet of me and standing there exclaimed: "Yes! By Heavens, it is *him!* Old Hans Diehl's big boy Pete! Pete! where've you been all these years?"

My heart was thumping heavily, and I am confident that my face grew pale, but I did not look at him or act as if I heard him.

## CHAPTER XX

### BEMUS HEIGHTS

**H**AD my nerve failed me when Sheriff White accosted me, I know not where this adventure of mine might have ended—probably at a rope's end; but luckily I kept my stolid cast of countenance, and picking up my sheep again, began cleaning it of some leaves and moss which the mischievous regulars had thrown upon it. As I paid no attention to him, he advanced nearer and, looking me square in the face, repeated his question. I looked up from my work and grinned as foolishly as I could, laid down my sheep, pulled off my old bonnet and addressing him as "General," as I had a half a hundred others before him, began gabbling at him in Low Dutch and offering him my sheep in exchange for the sword, gun and uniform I wanted. My evident innocence—I looked him straight in the eye as I talked—clearly astonished him and caused him to doubt his own judgment; for after listening a moment, he changed the confident look which he had worn for one of confusion, and backing away swore roundly under his breath, at the same time declaring he never saw such a resemblance in all his life. He understood but little of Low Dutch, and calling to him, a private who could converse with me, listened to the fellow while he interpreted my story. I had luckily located my

residence twenty miles or more from his residence, else he must have known the deceit even then. As the yarn was finished, he walked off muttering and wagging his head.

Soon after Riedesel came from the direction of Burgoyne's headquarters in company with General Fraser and another officer whom I now suppose to have been Phillips, and to these I offered my sheep and my story, including information that was of great importance if true. Even Riedesel did not understand my Low Dutch and the regular who did, was again called upon to act as interpreter. Several of the Brunswickers standing near, had heard what I had said and from their looks and actions I was confident that they, more than all others, feared an attack and would at the first opportunity follow those of their fellows that had ere then deserted to the American lines. Sheriff White meanwhile stood by, and even after Riedesel had ordered me paid for my sheep, and a gun, bayonet and ammunition had been given to me, kept eyeing me, until I was relieved by a summons to go with my interpreter to the officers' headquarters, where I insisted I must be when I gave out the alleged important information. Here, while awaiting a further hearing, I was served with food, which my new acquaintance informed me, was growing very scarce, and as I stuffed my mouth full, I kept jabbering excitedly about my wrongs. I told how I had been robbed of my flocks and herds, how my brother had been forced to go with the Yankees as a shovel man, and how I had barely escaped with my last sheep.

It was sometime after one P. M. when I finally gained a second hearing. Waxing even more mys-

sterious and excited, I led Riedesel and the others to a little knoll, some distance toward the American lines and as I talked of the attack I claimed to have heard planned for to-day, I pointed toward the neck of woods where Morgan had agreed to have some of his men show themselves. This point was nearly a mile distant from the west wing of the British intrenchments, but was now hardly more than half that distance from us. I explained how the riflemen were to watch from it and await a flank movement from the wooded heights, yet farther to the northwest, when they were to charge across.

"And does this man mean to say that Morgan's riflemen are in these woods, right across this creek?" asked General Fraser.

"Yes, General. They propose sending a detachment around through the shelter of the woods along this side hill, right up here and when we are engaged in that direction, they will charge across, hoping to get within a close shooting distance before we can form."

"We'll checkmate them there then," declared the general. "We'll put out a line of marksmen well in front and clear to the top of the ridge, with orders to fire and retreat. The Americans will naturally follow and if they do, we'll charge up the hill and cut them off." Almost immediately, he issued that order, and I saw his best Canadian sharpshooters making for the woods farther back along the hill.

This was not what I desired by any means, and it was promptness I had not foreseen; nor had my friends counted on it. That they would be drawn in, seemed almost certain. I must in some way prevent it. I was puzzling over this unexpected problem,

when I saw a detachment of at least a dozen of Morgan's men skulking in and around a point of brush, not more than three hundred yards from the knoll on which we were standing. That they had come farther in toward the lines than Morgan had planned, I was quite certain and that they were unaware of the larger force circling around upon the side hill, seemed equally plain to me. Something must be done and that at once. I did not hesitate, but raising my musket, pointed it in their direction and making sure it was sighted too low to hit any one, pulled the trigger.

This was the very thing the British did not desire. They preferred bringing on the fight as they had planned. As I turned therefore, after the shooting and pointing my smoking gun at the woods, began jabbering again, it was to find three very indignant officers. Fraser in particular was so angry, that he struck me with the flat of his sword and ordered me back to camp. His command had hardly left his mouth, when I saw a patch of cloth fly from his left coat sleeve. The thought flashed upon me that Murphy was firing at him, for I had heard him say only the day before, that he had rather kill Fraser than Burgoyne, he and Morgan agreeing that if the British army escaped, it would be under Fraser's tactics, even though Burgoyne received credit for it. The thought that I had led this gallant officer out here to be killed, so shocked me, that forgetting my rôle I now bawled out in my every day English: "Down General! Down! For God's sake, down! They're shooting at *you*."

All present, were astonished at my sudden change of dialect and looked from one to another in amaze-

ment, until the general recovering himself first, rushed at me with drawn sword, shouting: "What does this mean, you rascal? Are you a spy?"

Before I could make answer, a burning pain had seemingly cut my head half in two and as I fell, I heard the crack of another rifle in the thicket opposite. The bullet had reached me before the report did and like the first, must have been aimed at the general, for it had cut his conspicuous uniform in another place, before glancing along my scalp. With a German oath Riedesel called out: "Come on, General! You're surely their target. If this fellow is a spy, he won't spy any more. His own comrades have killed him."

I remember hearing all this and then for a few seconds, I was blinded by my own blood, which running down into my eyes over my face, must have rendered me a ghastly sight. I had sense enough to lie low on the knoll, until I could tie a large white handkerchief about my head, when I scrambled to my feet and started on a run toward our lines. It was well for me that I was so far advanced toward my own friends else I must have been shot down by the Canadians. At first I staggered and reeled along, making a hard mark to hit. Then I gathered strength and momentum, and ran well. As I ran, the Canadians put bullets all around me and three through my shirt, which hung loosely outside my belt. I soon reached the shelter of the point of woods and was there received with cheers. Then, dodging from tree to tree, like the rest, I began loading and firing. My new Hessian musket did not suit me and I passed the word by Mercer, a private whom Colonel Morgan used that day to carry dis-



patches to the rear, to send my own rifle to the front. This he did, and within thirty minutes from the time I left the knoll, I had my own equipment, and was putting the best of shots into the British ranks.

That shot I had fired from the knoll, had precipitated the Second Battle of Bemus Heights, just as Morgan, Arnold and Murphy had anticipated; and at three o'clock the fight was furiously raging. Of course, I can never forget the smallest incident of this my first great battle. It was a glorious October afternoon. A strong southeast wind, blowing up from off the face of the Hudson, rolled the sulphurous smoke in great surging masses, up into the woods on the higher ground, and on over to the west. It has been said that the smoke hid the battlefield most of the afternoon. This is a mistake. It did hinder marksmanship up in the woods, into which Fraser had so promptly thrown his Canadians, and had it not been for Morgan's powerful whistle and voice, either of which could be heard above the roar of the cannon farther eastward, or the constant spiteful cracking of rifles nearer, his men might have been lured too far and cut off. As it was, I hastened to him at the first opportunity and in a few rapid sentences informed him of that danger. When I found him, his sword was at his side and with a long deer rifle in hand, he was darting about among the trees, shooting along with his men.

"Well done, my lad! You turned all hell loose over there, didn't you?"

As we talked, he hugged one tree, I another, and twice was the bark of my own tree clipped just above my broad shoulders. Oh, but there was close

shooting that day, despite the smoke, and for nearly an hour we held the woods against all their best efforts. Finally there seemed a lull in the battle along our end of the line and the word was passed that we were to charge and drive them from their guns in the battery farthest west. In anticipation of this order, we worked from tree to tree, down as near the edge of the clearing as we dare go, and there lay in readiness, firing occasionally as a mark presented itself. Suddenly Morgan's sharp whistle rang out three times, and as this was the signal preliminary to some specific command, there was comparative silence. Then followed: "Murphy and the two Ehlersons, report to me here at once!" By the two Ehlersons and Murphy, I knew he meant David Ehleron, I, Peter Ehleron, and Tim Murphy, and from our respective trees near the edge of the wood, we ran toward him. Murphy, with his usual hardihood, ran across the circle of the wood through the open, and a volley of musketry from behind the knoll I had first shot from, showed that the enemy were watching us closely. Running like a hare, Murphy with his usual luck reached cover safely, just after Ehleron and I had reported to the colonel, for though farther distant, he had by this dangerous short cut made time.

"Boys, before we charge, I want you three crack shots to 'work up along through the woods and knock Fraser off that horse. That is he riding up back of their line yonder, a mile and a half away. See him? There he comes out from behind that clump of brush, riding like the wind. We *must* down him before we make the charge, or we'll never dislodge 'em. Hurry now, and shoot to kill."

Almost before the words were out of his mouth, we three were running north through the woods. Despite Murphy's recent race across the open, he outran me in the woods and we both distanced Dave the first five hundred yards. The woods, a fourth of a mile north, ran out east a considerable distance, and into this point we made our way. As we came up over a little rise near the open, we could see Fraser galloping up the line straight at us, but as yet four hundred yards distant. No one had seen us, and evidently no one expected an attack from that quarter, for it was a dangerous position because of the liability of being cut off from our left wing, by the enemy's right. Ehleron and I sought each a tree trunk, but Murphy shinned up a sapling like a monkey, swung himself into a larger tree, and as I handed him his big double-barrelled rifle, a weapon similar to my own, only a trifle lighter, called out: "I bet ye the price o' me gun, I git him afore yeess."

I made no reply, but sought cover and an opportunity soon offering, shot at the horse. I could not shoot at so gallant an officer. The distance was fully three hundred yards, but the horse reared and I knew I had hit him. Almost at the same instant Murphy's rifle cracked and as the general reeled and clutched at his stomach, low down, Tim called out: "I got him! 'Twas my shot, ye Dutch fool! If ye hadn't 'a made that harse rare as ye did, I'd 'a plumbed me man avin wid the shooldhers."

An instant later he was sliding down the tree, and we made our retreat, amid a rattle of musketry, the bullets singing about our heads and clipping leaves, twigs and pieces of bark from the tree trunks

about us. We ran as fast as we could toward the centre of our line, but before we could reach the point from which we had started, we heard Morgan's whistle shrilly sounding. Once! Then a pause. Then three quick notes and a yell that brought every man to his feet and sent him flying toward the enemy. I had paused to load both barrels and so had Murphy, both of us panting like dogs and the sweat running down our faces in streams. We finished almost together, and with our comrades swarming along, somewhat in advance of us, broke into a run that soon put us with them. Just after we started, the Brunswickers whom Fraser had been endeavoring to stiffen,—something he had no right to do by the way,—fired a volley, which happily went well over our heads; and without the loss of more than a half dozen men, we swept on unchecked.

At this instant from out our right rode Arnold on a big black horse, the very picture of war. Bursting from out a cloud of smoke and standing straight in his stirrups to wave his sword, he rode like the wind, his gallant steed flecked with foam, which showed white and lathery on his glossy sides and on the legs of the rider. He rode the horse right up where you would never believe a cat could have scrambled, and when I reached the top myself, was down below, cutting, slashing and parrying with superhuman activity and dexterity. Murphy was the first man to follow him, Nick Stoner of old Schoharie was second and I was third. Once below, I had no time to see what others were doing. I shot twice into the huddled Hessians, and then trailing my rifle with my left hand, used my axe

with my right, until a big German captain cut the handle nearly off with a downward blow of his sabre. I remember dodging back to avoid him, getting a prod from behind with a bayonet in the hands of a Hessian who was down, lunging forward in response to it, drawing the big knife, which I had not thought of before, and becoming a fiend incarnate.

The fight at that particular point was well over in five minutes, but during that time I must have committed murder a half dozen times. That heavy knife was a terrible weapon, and I was frenzied with pain and the fury of war. My stalwart companions all about me, their frocks stained with blood and the grime of smoke, were similarly engaged. The enemy could not withstand us. They began to cry for quarter, and we all desisted. Out on our right we beheld Arnold, yet astride his horse, flying to head another detachment, but at that instant a ball struck his leg, passed through the horse, and horse and man went down together. Even as the British had rushed to bear the wounded Fraser from the field, so did we now rally about the prostrate Arnold. He was not in danger of capture, however, for the British everywhere were retreating. In less than two hours from the time I fired that first shot from their lines, we had them thoroughly whipped and had not Arnold fallen as he did, we would have compelled their surrender there and then, for a further effort on our part must have meant surrender or annihilation.

There was great rejoicing in camp that night and the only thought that marred our triumph was that the commanding officer, Gates, had not permitted us to follow up our victory.

## CHAPTER XXI

### I MAKE A SPEECH

**T**HE morning following the Second Battle of Bemus Heights, was cold and grey, and while the leaden clouds hung low, an occasional spit of sleet or rain rendered things dreary and uncomfortable. I had had no sleep the night of the 6th, and therefore lay late the morning of the 8th. When I did come out, however, it was to find myself much talked about. Several of the captured and deserting Hessians had told how well I acted my part and, doubtless, because they exaggerated it, my fame for bravery and ready wit throve apace. I was called to the officers' quarters and there told that Heaven and earth should be moved to gain me promotion; but knowing as I did, that Gates was incensed rather than pleased at my triumph, and fearing a fight over my case, I begged that nothing should be done. Besides, I knew my forte. I was confident that I could do such work as I had done, or even better, but was equally certain that I would not be a credit to myself as an officer. Murphy, though declining promotion for himself by reason of his lack of education, was much incensed at me because I would not accept. Had I listened to him, I might have been a lieutenant at the least, and I am not sure but that I could have secured a captaincy.

The loss on our side had not been heavy, and as

the full result of that glorious 7th of October became fully known there was much rejoicing in the Continental camp and through all the country. While the enemy had lost one general, one lieutenant-colonel, two captains, seven subalterns, five sergeants, one hundred and sixty rank and file killed and about two hundred and fifty wounded, to say nothing of two hundred and seventy-five taken prisoners (thirty-five of these last being officers), we had not had a man captured and our loss in killed was less than fifty, while our wounded numbered but ninety-seven. Had we followed up the advantage that day gained, we might have captured Burgoyne's entire army, which was now only half the size of ours, but Gates's policy of inactivity prevailed, and we came near letting them all escape. At the earnest entreaty of the lesser officers, Gates did permit us to keep up a desultory cannonade, and though we knew it not, our great shot threw dirt upon the coffin of the brave Fraser, who was buried the night of the 8th in a redoubt near the river. On the morning of the 9th, it became apparent to all our force that Burgoyne was seeking to escape, and had little more fight left in him. He deserted the fortifications which he had so carefully constructed on the heights, and made northeast toward the river, evidently desiring to cross and evade us, north or south. In this scheme he was headed off by General Fellows, who with his Massachusetts militia occupied the approach to the ford, while Morgan, Learned and Poor harried him on the west. Thus matters remained for nearly a week, and while I had some duty to perform every day, I was not particularly busy and had considerable time for reflection.

More, indeed, than before since leaving Philadelphia. One thing annoyed me, and that was Major Woolsey's careful avoidance of me. Thrown together as we had been from Okwaga up, he could not well do otherwise than treat me as a companion, but since we had joined the army, he had scarcely spoken to me, answered my salute with but a stiff inclination of the head, and it seemed to me carried the formality between privates and officers altogether too far. With the other officers I was quite an equal. Each and every one save this fellow and General Gates himself, conversed with me frequently, quite as if I had been one of themselves. I was an especial favorite of Morgan, and while I endeavored to so conduct myself that presumption could never be laid at my door, I was on far more familiar terms with all the officers save Woolsey and Gates, than any of the other privates were.

Early in September, just after reaching the vicinity of Gates' army, I had sent back to Philadelphia a brief note announcing my safe arrival and asking that a brief letter, at least, might be sent me, care Morgan's riflemen, as I expected to be found in that division. On the night of October 11th a bulky letter reached me in camp. It was directed in Friend Jason's peculiar up-and-down chirography. For a full minute I hardly had courage to open it, but finally, my heart beating fast, I broke the strong wrapper at the end and found therein three letters, each in a separate envelope. One was directed in the same hand the outer wrapper had been. Another in the smaller hand of Aunt Abigail, so similar to that of Uncle Jason, and a third—ah yes! My heart gave a great bound as I recognized that honest,



round, yet womanly tracery, so characteristic of Edith's dear hand. I dropped both the other letters and in trembling haste tore open the corner of this delicate envelope. As I drew forth the dainty sheet and unfolded it, a fragrance I can never forget greeted my senses, while before my eager eyes lay a small spray of rosemary, which grew in no other place about the old house than in the little bed beside the arbor door. This spray was stitched to the paper with dainty white silk. Above and below were drawn pretty scrolls and in the lower scroll, half under the leaf as if modestly seeking shelter from even my eyes, were the words: "That's for remembrance." The letter that followed was brief and hastily written:

"PHILADELPHIA, *September 21, 1777.*

DEAR BIG BROTHER QUEDAR:

Uncle Jason says I have a chance to send you a few words. There is much that I would like to say, but I have only time to tell you that we are very lonely without you; that I (the singular pronoun was here crossed out) we miss you very much and hope you are well and happy. I need not tell you that we all believe you will do your duty as a man and a soldier, and that we hope to see you soon. We pray for you every day and we (I) have you chiefly in mind when I say the prayer for the absent, which you and I used to say in the little chapel together. We shall never forget you, Dear Brother, whether or not you come back, and we are all looking forward to the day when we shall see you and have you with us. Do not risk your life more than duty demands. You *must* come back to us some day. We never knew how happy we were when you were here, until we missed you, and while we desire you to do your full duty to your country, we do hope to see you soon safe and well. Everybody about the old place is in good

health and all send you best wishes. Good-bye and may  
God keep you. Your Sister,  
EDITH.

P. S. I was twenty-one the day that the British came  
so near the city. Uncle Jason says he has told you all  
about them. E. D."

Yes, Uncle Jason did tell me about them. How they marched so near, the great scare on the 19th, and how they would probably soon occupy the city, which indeed, Howe did do on the 26th. But that was not all he told me. I can best tell the rest by quoting the dear old man's words, which judging by the unusual tremor in his steady hand, must have been written under some stress of excitement.

And now my dear lad, I must tell thee of one incident which I opine will concern thee even more than it does me. If it does not, then let it pass from thy mind, as the gossip of a deluded old man, who perhaps, often talks or writes what he should not. It was three days after thy departure, that Captain Woolsey came to the place and sought audience with Edith, who seemed anxious to avoid him. They had a long conference on the veranda, he talking and she listening with downcast eyes and pale face. I could see them from where I sat at my desk within the house. Finally, the captain, who seemed much perturbed, sent a servant to request my presence. As I approached them the captain arose and motioned me to his seat; and then, apparently in an excited frame of mind, began pacing back and forth before us while he talked.

"Mr. Horne," he began, "I have sent for you that you may prevail on this young lady, to reconsider a very foolish determination. She tells me that she never understood before, the conditions of her father's will, or at least those conditions which call upon her to become my wife; that, in short, she cannot accept them. Will you not say to her that you consider her a very foolish woman?"

For an instant, my dear Peter, I was nonplussed, for diplomacy and evasion, as thou knowest, never were and never can be my servants. However, I feel that I escaped quite easily, for without refusing his request, or answering him, I turned to Edith and inquired: "Is thy decision based on careful consideration, my dear?"

"It is, Uncle, and is irrevocable," was her reply.

"Then I am persuaded we cannot change her, Friend," quoth I, and unless I am mistaken, which I hope I am, the captain muttered an oath, under his breath.

"But I love her—love her madly, sir!" he began. "I—"

"Which information and argument are for her ears and not mine, sir," was my reply.

There was much more of this letter, for Uncle Jason had added a lengthy postscript at his office, but I did not read it then. Neither did I read that from Aunt Abigail, but holding all three letters in my hand, sat for more than an hour, gazing out across the western hills, until the last rays of the sinking sun, shining through the storm clouds, had painted on the heavens above a rainbow of hope and promise, such as shone in my soul all that night and for days thereafter.

How long I should have sat thus, I do not know, had not Murphy come into the tent and having looked about, secured some kindlings and started a fire. Then I bestirred myself to assist in making coffee and other preparations for supper. Murphy caught me by the arm as I started up, and looking him in the face at this peculiar action, I saw that trouble of some sort, clouded his usually sanguine expression of countenance. "What's the matter, Tim?" I asked.

"Did ye murdher yer owld uncle what fed an' housed ye?" was his startling reply.

"No, Tim. I didn't."

"Then come outen this an' warrum the chops of the spalpane wat's accushin ye' 'fore I do it fer ye."

"Who is it, Tim?"

"Well! The man I larruped fer sayin of it, was Sandy McAndrews, o' Aarnold's recruits, but 'fore I let him up, he confessed to me, 'twas Cappen Woolsey, the man ye brought through the Injun country, who towld him. He's a half baked major, now I suppose, an' wan o' owld codfish-ater's cronies, but if ye don't make him chaw his worruds wid his ter-baccy, ye're not the Dootchman I take ye fer."

"Come with me, Tim!" and he followed me as I strode toward Woolsey's tent. Arrived at the door, the major's negro servant announced us.

"I do not care to see the fellow," I heard Woolsey say, but followed close by Tim, I stepped inside, to find ex-Sheriff White and the narrow faced fellow who had called himself Beacraft sitting close beside the major as if the three had been talking together. "Leave my quarters, sir, before I order your arrest!" thundered the major, hate glaring from his drink-inflamed eyes.

"On what grounds, sir?" I demanded.

"On a charge of murder—the murder of your own uncle, Hans Diehl. Oh, I know you, Peter Diehl, alias Ehleron."

"My name is not Diehl as this man knows," said I turning to Beacraft, who under my straightforward gaze, dropped his eyes and turned pale. "And by what authority do you arrest me, sir, pray? Are you sheriff of the county in which this murder was committed? Is this man White now sheriff of that county? Was he not drummed out of it? Do not forget, sir, that while you are an officer, you must

keep your slanderous tongue curbed; you are a wilful and malicious liar. Don't let me ever hear of any more such reports as this coming from either you or ex-Sheriff White, or I may decide to have you both taken back to your old homes, on charges you both fear to meet. When you want me, you know where you can find me; and I am quite certain that I shall not be found plotting with Tories."

No one made a reply. I had run down. There was nothing more that I could say, and with a contemptuous snap of my fingers at the faces of the three, I turned on my heel and left the tent. Murphy trotted close after, swearing in pure ecstasy. Arrived at our tent, he squatted down and gazed at me for some time. Then, rolling himself over and over as a trick dog might, he kept exclaiming: "Wow! Wow!" After thus relieving his feelings he finally sat up, looked at me again and again burst out, pausing between his spasms to whisper: "Oh, ye divil ye! But *didn't* ye give it to 'em sthrong? Oh, ye divil ye!" As for me I set about my preparations for supper again.

We had barely finished our supper, when the order came to turn out for a reconnoissance, and under cover of the darkness, Tim, I and one hundred others under Woolsey, stole along toward the enemy's lines. This was one of Gates's ideas. Morgan had declared from one to five men better for the business at hand; that one hundred were not enough for fight, and were too many to run well or move secretly. It was dangerous work, for we were liable to stumble onto some outpost of the desperately beleaguered British at any minute. We were lucky enough to avoid such con-

tact, however, all through the night, and, having learned little, were preparing to return to our own lines, when the gray dawn began to peer through the chilling mists and fogs which at that hour rolled up from the river. To the west was a heavy forest, and to avoid this, we turned into the thicker fog and made our way along close to the river. We had proceeded through this heavy mist some distance, the light meanwhile growing stronger, when a sudden whirling wind rent the fog and showed us at least one hundred and fifty British, straight ahead. The main body was also much nearer to the northwest than we had supposed. With no shelter except the woods, in which we knew we might be surrounded, there was no better way than to charge ahead and this we did at a swift run. A volley from our opposers killed four and wounded a dozen of our little force, but being aimed too high, did less damage than might have been expected. We returned the fire, and had the satisfaction of seeing twice as many red coats writhing on the ground. Falling flat on our faces, we reloaded before proceeding further. Then we rose and yelling like demons charged again, to again fall flat as we saw their guns come up for a volley which did us absolutely no harm. Woolsey at the first appearance of the enemy had dodged behind us. We needed no orders, for we knew Morgan's tactics too well. Up we scrambled again and charged them once more, firing this time intermittently as we ran. The foe with great precision fired in volleys, which we escaped by falling, and into their solid ranks we kept pouring our galling fire. They were losing men fast, and soon a panic seized them. They broke

ranks, huddled, then scattered like fowls and ran in all directions. Unconsciously, Murphy and I had assumed the leadership of our men, Woolsey being too much frightened to do more than follow, wave his sword and swear. It was our voices ringing out together that had given the signals for firing and falling. We were both well ahead, when Murphy at our last onset caught his toe under a root and went down. I caught a glimpse of his angry red face and laughed as I pressed forward, well knowing he would be with me a minute later, for never did I see a man swifter of foot than he. I had not a lead of thirty feet when I heard him cry out, as if in rage and turned just in time to see him struggling with Major Woolsey, his grip on the pistol wrist of that officer. I saw him wrest the pistol from him and throw it into the river. Then I fell myself, having caught my foot in a mass of vines, and as I went I exclaimed—"the dream! The dream on the island! My God am I shot?" Before I could regain my feet Murphy had caught up with me and was bending over me, a look of horror in his face.

"Pather! Pather darlint, air ye kilt? Be all that's howly, if ye air, I'll go back an' finish him." No one else heard him, for the firing on all sides was a constant din.

"No Tim! No! I'm all right. But what in the world were you doing with the major?"

"Kim on! It's allus a fool fer luck," was all the reply he made me, and scrambling to my feet, we both ran to the front again. A few minutes later, after the skirmish was well over, he called to me in a mysterious way and as we got together aside, he

reached up and with his gun, poked the old leather bonnet off my head. Picking it up, he held it toward me. "D'ye see that?" pointing to a couple of holes in its ridged rear crown. I took it from his hands and examined it. There were two holes, the rear one lower than that in front, as if I had been fired at from behind. "He was just afther takin' a second crack at ye, whin I rowled back atwixt the legs av him. Curse his coward sowl, I wish't I'd trun him into the river."

"He meant to do for me all right enough, I guess, Tim. At least it looks that way."

"Faith! an I don't guess at all, at all. I know, me bye. What's this murderin grudge he has agin ye? Sure ye give it to him strong enough yisterday, but ye had rason an' what ye said cu'd niver a fired a man up to shoot ye down from behind."

"I don't know just what his grudge is, Tim, I'm sure," I replied, but a strange feeling of joy sprang up within me as my heart at that very instant whispered I did know. Could that be it? I looked at the pallid major, who was striving to appear at ease and to avoid my gaze. Murphy and I did not mention this incident among our comrades, and while two of them who had seen Murphy's struggle with the major, started some talk, we so managed to pass it off, that it soon died away. We both well knew that we could not prove malice and that the major stood well with Gates. We therefore let it pass.

One week from that morning, Burgoyne, cut off on every hand, surrendered 5,763 men and officers, together with their arms, but with very little provision, for his army was literally starved into submission. Gates, who seemed to have an unaccount-



able hold on Congress, despite his military worthlessness, received a medal; Arnold, embittered by what he considered ingratitude, went to his ruin; Morgan, whose services even Gates was shrewd enough to recognize, was called south, soon after the battle of Monmouth, to win new victories for his superiors; and Murphy, Ehleron and I, together with most of Long's company of Morgan's riflemen, were sent to Schoharie to cope with the Tories and Indians, who despite their defeats at Oriskany and the Heights were constantly making murderous incursions.

## CHAPTER XXII

### WAR NEWS

**I** HAVE never been able to account, even to myself, for my refusal in the fall of 1777, to accompany the main body of Morgan's riflemen, who went south to muster at Valley Forge, nor for my refusal later of an appointment to the commissary department of the army there, obtained for me by Colonel Morgan. I am sure he would have pushed me ahead and that I might the sooner have reached those positions of trust I later filled, but refuse I did and it was perhaps as well.

The winter of 1778-9 was even more dreary than the previous winter had been to me. However, I felt it my duty to stay and stay we did, although I am quite sure we could have gained a transfer by an appeal at any time. Our life was one of inactivity and dreary waiting. The terrible massacre at Cherry Valley, less than a score of miles northwest in November of 1778, had warned us what we might expect and had driven nearly all the settlers of the valley into the three forts. Woolsey was yet in command of the Middle Fort, for he had managed to remain and, for reasons I could easily guess, did not seem to desire to follow the fortunes of his patron Gates southward. As the days and months went by, he seemed to grow more and more tyrannical and to delight in keeping me at some form of

fatigue duty. In one way and another, I had procured a considerable number of Greek and Latin text-books and other works, and because of my desire for knowledge as well as for want of recreation of another kind, I pored over these every hour that I could possibly get to myself. Still I was not allowed to suffer for lack of exercise. My amiable commandant seemed to delight in keeping me at fatigue duty, daily sending me to cut wood, carry water and, whenever there was excuse for it, on long scouting expeditions—especially dangerous ones. When you realize that I was not regularly enlisted, was a free ranger, drawing only my rations and ammunition, technically at liberty at any time to pull out and go where I pleased, you can also realize that it was hard for me to stay. Only my conviction, that I could be of far more use to the cause here than elsewhere, and that my training in woodcraft and knowledge of this country fitted me for service in this region, kept me. At times I did resolve to leave and that for good, but Murphy's pleadings and the affection with which I was generally regarded by my companions in old Schoharie, caused me as often to forego my resolution.

From the scant information I was enabled to gain that winter, I had early understood the peculiar position in which Washington, our able Commander in Chief, was placed. On the one hand was a prejudiced Congress of the people, impractical in military affairs, however well meaning they might be, and these were the catspaw of Gates and his clique. Actuated by the wires the Cabal pulled, even though Congress and the people did not realize it and acted honestly enough, Congress voiced the popular

clamor for a campaign against Canada. Every fair-minded, practical man of the ranks appreciated Washington's opposition to this scheme, and I shall never forget the discussion that went on, through all those early months of 1779.

When the news finally came that Washington had decided on a campaign into the Indian country, ostensibly against Fort Niagara, but in reality as a chastisement of the Six Nations in southern and central New York and northern Pennsylvania, Long's command lost no time in making application for service, and much as Woolsey objected, the greater portion of the Schoharie scout, of which Murphy had practical if not actual command, was early in spring notified that it should participate. Woolsey and his few adherents had urged the necessity of a patrol of rangers along the Mohawk and through the Schoharie valleys and the territory tributary, citing the frequent raids in the region, notably that at Cherry Valley, where Walter Butler had done such bloody work; but the Washington influence, wisely as I have ever thought, decided against him. It was plain to every practical soldier that the scanty Continental forces could not profitably do police duty over a few scattered settlements whose inhabitants could, and should, long before have taken refuge in the many forts provided. Especially so, when the stronghold of the raiders, along the Susquehanna and Genesee and out about the lesser lake country as well, needed chastisement and rout. Here for two years and more, had Tories like the Butlers found convenient refuge and food, and from the day that Walter Butler escaped from the Albany jail, to swoop down soon after on

Cherry Valley, he and his blood-thirsty associates, had in comparative safety, incited the Six Nations to hellish deeds. The news that this nest was to be routed, that the Indian villages and Tory stronghold were to be laid waste, was indeed welcome to all but such Continentals as Woolsey. Happily, there were but few of his stripe, and when we marched north adown the river trail that early spring day, we departed with the best wishes of all Schoharie.

It was late in May before Colonel William Butler of Clinton's command came to Schoharie to lead us across to Canajoharie and thence to the Otsego, where Clinton's forces were gathering.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### TAMALAUQUA

**S**OON after we left Schoharie I was sent across country toward Otsego, while the main body of our troops, consisting of the Fourth Pennsylvania and Rifle Corps, went around by the Mohawk, thence across from Canajoharie, via Springfield, to the lake. We left Schoharie the morning of June 11th. I scouted over much of the intervening country, north and south of a direct route, took my time, moved with caution and reached the lake at sunset of the 14th. It had been a long, hot day, and as I came out upon the gravelly beach near the head of the forest-embosomed Otsego, I was fain to lay me down and drink in the beauty of the scenery.

On this occasion, however, I knew that I had no need for haste. My instructions had been to search carefully for traces of war parties or scouts, to ascertain if such were lingering about the lake, and if so, to meet the main body of our army and apprise them so that skirmishers might be sent out. I was now careful not to show myself along the open water and much as I desired to lave my face and hands in the crystal fluid, much as I should have enjoyed a plunge and swim in the clear depths so softly lapping the nearby sands, I did not venture outside the brush fringing the narrow beach. From the hill

top, some distance back, I had paused and scanned all the valley, but so far as eye could see, there was neither smoke nor sign of human life. Having now crept down between the tree trunks, alongside a little rill, the waters of which laved the roots of the giant growth of mixed oak, pine and hemlock, I ascended a leaning tree trunk and seating myself on a sweeping limb, began a careful scrutiny of all that came within my range of vision.

Before me, the long, narrow lake, lying like quicksilver in a wooden trencher. To my left, the eastern hills, yet roseate with the last rays of the setting sun. To my right, the western ridge, its forest-covered crown all afire; and as the gentle breeze swept along it from south to north, gleaming shafts twisted, intertwined and gave out effects more glorious than any art of man could create. Farther down this slope, shadows held sway, causing the appearance of a broad belt of sombre deep green extending alongside all the basin, while yet farther down, next the shore, the pure water gave back a reflection that rendered the twilight soft and lustrous. Except for the occasional leap of a trout after one of the myriad insects dancing about over the mirror-like surface of the lake, there was not a sound nor a movement near in shore, for the breezes swept high across the ridges and did not disturb the placid waters. Farther out, there was a slowly widening dark ripple, and I knew that soon the evening breeze would settle down and sweep to higher ground the mists that always come at summer nightfall, from off such waters. To the south, full eight miles distant, where the hills were lower, there was yet more light, the valley and lake seemed

wider; and looking across the many wooded points extending here and there out from the graceful sweep of the main shores, I studied the expanse long and carefully. Thus I sat for more than an hour, the twilight slowly deepening over all, when from out a little cove along the eastern shore, fully two miles distant, and between me and the better light beyond, floated a strange object.

It was not a canoe, although it moved like one. No. It was longer than the longest of canoes, and in places much higher out of the water. At that distance, it looked like nothing else than a floating tree top. Yet surely there was no current that could carry that object so fast south and west. It was moving at least three miles an hour. Some human agency must be propelling it. It was my duty to ascertain what it was. On first thoughts I decided to go back some distance north, around the head of the lake and follow down the eastern shore, but as the object seemed making westward, I changed my mind and hurried along the western ridge instead. I was nearly abreast of the point from which I had seen the object start, when darkness finally came on. I was making but poor headway through the brush and over fallen trees. What was worse, I was making more or less noise. As the lake shore for a long distance ahead was tolerably straight, I decided to try the beach. A mile farther south, I fancied I could make out the form of the tree, or whatever the object was, still moving along shore. Within five minutes I ascertained that the object I had taken for my float, was a lone tree, standing on a rocky point standing out into the lake. When I moved, it appeared to move. When I stood, it too



was stationary. Chagrined at my error and wondering what had become of the object I had first seen, I started on and after travelling a half mile or more, felt sure that I smelled smoke. I stopped, sniffed the south wind now drawing gently up the valley, and decided that there *was* a fire not far distant. Just ahead was the long narrow point, at the extremity of which was the tree that had deceived me. Over beyond it I was quite sure, was a deep cove. I had been many times along this lake, and while no man occasionally visiting such a place could be expected to remember all the many indentations and curves, I was confident that I was now right. There was such a cove down three miles from the head of the lake, and surely I had come that distance or near it.

“Yes,” muttered I to myself, as I stole along, “I am right this time, and”—I stopped suddenly, crouched down and caught my breath. The light of a small fire was shining against some tree tops over across and beyond the point. I crept to the crest of the high neck of land from which the point jutted out, cautiously elevated my head and looking across the cove, beheld a fire, around which were grouped at least a dozen Indians. That it was a war party, I felt confident, for there were no pap-pooes or dogs running about, and the braves were doing their own roasting before the fire. The fire was also shut out from view on the lake side, by a carefully constructed brush screen. The cove was not over six hundred yards wide, and ran back into the hillside at least five hundred yards from the end of the point. I kept my eyes on the group about the fire, and knowing that they could not see me,

crossed the neck and advanced to the water's edge, that I might the more easily study it. My confidence in the gloom of night, had rendered me a trifle incautious, and as I strode along on the gravel, the echoes of my heavy tread startled me. Just then I glanced to the left and fancied I could make out the tree top I had seen an hour before, on the bosom of the lake. Certainly some object was moving in across the cove from the point, if not toward the camp fire. There was, and it was the tree top I had first seen.

It was now changing its course, and coming in close along shore. There was a rustling in its branches as it neared me, and as it swung around a trifle, I fancied I could detect a glassy yellow gleam among the upright limbs. Involuntarily I crouched down, and as I crept for the shelter of the brush again, heard the twang of a bowstring and the hurtling of an arrow, large and well driven. The arrow passed right above my head and buried itself in what I had supposed to be a gnarled tree root, on the higher ground. Instantly the root resolved itself into a large deer, which in its dying agony leaped far out from the face of the low bluff, and fell kicking at the water's edge, not twenty feet from where I was crouching. Even before it had brought up there, I heard a loud splash out near the float, and looking back, I could see the outlines of some large animal swimming toward me, like a dog retrieving game for his master. It seemed too large for a dog, and it was coming straight at me. I dropped on one knee, loosened my knife, felt the priming of my rifle and as the beast reached the beach and shook itself, cocked both barrels. I raised my gun to shoot,

but trembled so I dare not risk it. By a supreme effort, however, I finally conquered my momentary terror and once more raised my gun. As I did so, I became conscious that I was on the verge of a very foolish action; that my shot was sure to bring the warriors of the opposite camp about my ears. And yet, if I retreated, would not that great beast pounce upon me? For an instant I was irresolute again, and stood trembling, scarce knowing whether to run or show fight.

As I thus stood, a deep bass voice came from out the floating tree top: "Hold! White Oneida no shoot, or Tamalagua's second arrow shall touch his heart."

I lowered my gun and let down its locks. It was the crazy Tuscarora and his cat. But how did he know I was the "White Oneida?" Where had he seen me, except in the disguise of an Indian, as he stalked past me that night in the council chamber two years before? I had never seen him since then; scarce heard of him in fact. And yet, what couldn't a man know who went about nights with the eyes of a cat? How many nights might he not have stood over me as I lay rolled in my blanket, secure from all natural eyes, in the depths of the forest? His recent feat of shooting down a deer with an arrow convinced me he could see what other men could not. That deer had stood at the summit of the bluff as I crept along, yet neither of us had seen the other. The deer had probably been fascinated by the campfire, as animals of its kind are wont to be, and seeing it at a considerable distance, Tamalagua had come in to slay it. If he could see a deer

at that distance, he could as easily see me. I was at his mercy.

While thus cogitating I descried the outlines of a large birchen canoe pushing out from the tree top. It was soon clear and coming rapidly toward shore. It did not come direct to me, but touched the beach where the deer had fallen. I now perceived that the huge cat was dragging the deer into the water. An instant later the canoe man had thrown his game into the canoe, pushed or paddled the craft along shore opposite to where I stood and stopped. "White Oneida come. His enemies surround him here. Canoe leave no trail," he said.

I hastened down, clambered in, and attempted to seat myself on the carcass of the deer as we swung away from shore, but nearly sprang overboard from fright instead, for the huge beast at the other end of the carcass suddenly snarled, laid hold of it with a force sufficient to crush the bones, and pulled it from under me. The master paused long enough to shift his paddle, deal the beast a blow and mutter some savage reproof. As the great cat slunk back, purring and snarling, the old Tuscarora resumed his paddling and we shot out past the drifting tree top, as near as I could judge headed across the lake. As we went, I glanced back toward the camp fire, now deserted, and I doubted not but that the warriors I had seen about it a few minutes before were skurrying along shore, seeking the object that had so startled all of us.

Not a word was spoken during that half hour's journey across the lonely lake, nor did Tamalagua once cease his steady stroke. He seemed to see and

know where he was going, although the darkness was so dense that I could not even make out the outline of either shore. Not a star was visible, a vast covering of low hanging cloud having spread itself over the valley with the coming of night. I was only aware of our proximity to the shore, when I heard the waves we created lapping against the rocks. We were entering some narrow passage, and putting my hand over the side of the canoe, I felt certain that we had entered a cove or stream. That it must be narrow, I knew from the echoes and the lapping waters on both sides our craft. The sound of falling water smote my ear, and at the same instant the canoe's prow grated on gravel.

“To the right,” commanded my companion, and I stepped over the side into water two or three inches deep, to stumble against a steep bank. As I straightened up, I heard the scuff of a moccasin as the Tuscarora stepped ashore, and felt the lurch of the canoe as the cat sprang after. “White Oneida build fire, roast and eat. Tamalaqua loves not the fire-light,” and he thrust into my hand a small quantity of dry ferns which I heard rustle as he gathered them. As my fire flashed up, I heard him on higher ground, and saw the swaying of the brush he had parted. Both cat and man had disappeared atop the bluff, extending out between my fire and the lake shore. Soon, however, at the brow of this bluff, appeared again the head and shoulders of my whilom guide. He made a strange picture, as he stood there in the dancing light the fire created, his long white beard, his squinting blue eyes, his hoary hair,

tangled, abundant and glossy. "White Oneida's enemies no see fire," was all he said as he threw down at my feet a haunch of the venison. Then he retired and I set about roasting for myself.

While busied about this roasting I could hear a tearing and mastication, like beasts feeding on raw meat, and from curiosity stealthily crept to the brow of the bluff. The faint light of the fire there revealed to me a disgusting sight. Sitting back toward me, was the Tuscarora, cutting into long strips the flesh of the dead buck. He would cut five or six of these, an inch or more in width, half as thick and from eight inches to a foot in length. Then taking one by the end, he would throw his head back, catch the dangling end of meat in his teeth and with apparently slight mastication, would slowly swallow until the entire piece had disappeared. Not far from him and facing me, lay the great cougar, flat on its belly, its paws outspread, and the eagerness of keen hunger gleaming in its great yellow eyes. As the master ate, he would occasionally pause to carve a coarser bit and throw at the beast, which, cat-like, would snarl and purr in pure ecstasy, while gorging itself.

My interest in this novel feast was so great, that I incautiously raised my head higher above the bank, when with a deep growl the beast arose and, every hair erect, stood glaring at me. I think that had I not ducked from sight and quickly crawled back down into the glen to my fire, that the beast would have jumped at me, in which case I am quite sure I should never have lived to tell this story. Trembling somewhat, I finished my repast and sat delib-

erating what to do, when Tamalagua appeared on the bank above, and shading his eyes from the fire-light, commanded me to rest. "Tamalagua hunt until the sun appear—then he too seek rest."

I needed no second invitation, and replenishing the fire with two or three small logs, untied my blanket, rolled it about me and slept the sleep of extreme weariness. It could not have been later than ten o'clock when I dropped off and it seemed hardly ten minutes before I was awake again, so sound had been my sleep—awake to find the gray light of dawn stealing down over the high hill tops, although as yet, all was semi-darkness around me. My legs felt numb. As I assayed to move them, I became aware that I was bound, and in the dim light beheld five Indians squatted near and gravely regarding me.

"Ugh! White man sleep heavy, all same's pappoose."

I made no answer. I was so bewildered, that I knew not what to say. The spokesman having waited as if for a reply and receiving none, resumed:

"White warrior heap brave. Make big splash in water. Then run. No tink leave trail. Wait for sun up. No tink Long Arrow see fire shine on trees. Mebbe Long Arrow pappoose. Mebbe no. White warrior make heap sport on Canada side. Run gauntlet—"

Long Arrow never finished his taunt, for there was a twang of bowstring, and the swish of the arrow as it cut through his chin and throat and out at the back of his neck. Close after, a long tawny body shot through the air, over my head and his,

landing with terrible claws outspread and teeth wide set atop the squatting group. Before I could move or make outcry, I saw one human neck bitten through, a head crushed in like an eggshell by a blow from a great paw. Closely following the cat came his crazy master, his long hair and beard streaming behind, with the rapidity of his motion. A boulder hurled from his hand, bounded from off the shoulder of one flying wretch as he dodged around the rocks toward the lake, and I later saw him swimming away, using but one arm. The fifth Indian, the smallest of the lot, seemed too nearly paralyzed with fright to do more than roll over and scramble about. As he lay struggling, the old Tuscarora swooped down upon him, caught him up and held him aloft by the neck and thigh as he bore him rapidly to the highest point of the rocks, from which he hurled him far out into the lake. He went whirling through the air, legs and arms outstretched, and as he struck the water the breath seemed beaten from his body. He sank deep in the clear depths to finally come slowly up to the surface, where he lay like some huge water spider. Just as he was about sinking again, he gasped, strangled, kicked and struck about, floated an instant, then sank from sight. I had arisen to a sitting posture as I watched him, but was knocked back again by the rush of Tamalaqua, who with his long bow was now beating off his cat, which seemed bent on tearing the bodies into pieces. Had he not come to my rescue, I think that the cat would have done for me soon. Under his master's blows, the repulsive brute slunk back and flattened itself on the ground, at each blow snarling with excitement and fear, and driving



its claws into the turf whereon it crouched. As if anxious to rid his pet of temptation, the master carried the three bodies to the point of rocks and one after another cast them into the lake. As he started to drag the last one away, the cat started after, as if to follow. Dropping his burden, Tamalaqua brought the brute a tremendous thwack lengthwise with his long bow, nor did he desist, but beat him again and again, until the cougar crouched snarling at his feet.

Having disposed of the last body, Tamalaqua now advanced upon me, knife in hand and with two or three quick strokes severed the willow-bark ropes that bound me. "Come!" said he as he threw my blanket, rifle and the contents of my small pack into the canoe, which he had brought around while I was limbering up. I climbed in. The cat bounded in after, nearly upsetting the already moving craft, and humbly crouched down before me. For a time at least, it was conquered. We shot out around the point into the open lake, and in the gray of the morning, skimmed over the misty waters along down the eastern shore. I do not think that we were above thirty minutes in making the next three miles, but by this time the rising sun had begun to shoot its shafts of pink across the higher hill tops, and the perfect light was all about us. Tamalaqua had not spoken since we started, but now he ceased his rapid paddling, passed his hand across his forehead and muttered: "Tamalaqua's brain burn. He must sleep. White Oneida safe now. Go his way. Mingoos no stay, but fly for Canada like wild goose."

"Does my father think they were all on this

side of the lake?" I inquired in my best Tuscarora.

"No. Some at head of lake," he returned in that tongue, and seemed pleased that I could understand him. "Tamalaqua no make war on Iroquois. No fight British. No fight Whigs. British, Boston men, Iroquois—all his friends. Mingoes hired dogs. He kill them. They fear him and run. Let White Oneida with Tuscarora tongue, run to foot of lake and there hide till nightfall. Tamalaqua weary now. He must take his game, eat again and sleep."

As he spoke he shot his canoe into another little cove, some two miles from the foot of the lake, ran it ashore, handed me my rifle, helped me make up my pack, and this accomplished, stood shading his eyes and looking south. Then he pointed. I took the hint and left him. Looking back five minutes later, I saw him shouldering a doe carcass, his cat at his heels, but as he entered the woods, there was no sign of the canoe, and I concluded that he must have driven it into the willows somewhere along shore.

An hour from that time, I had reached the foot of the lake, noted the appearance of things well, and confident that there were no other bands about, and that the Mingoes would leave that section as soon as possible, struck up the west side and on over the trail toward Springfield.

In making my report, I did not mention my singular adventures of the night, except to say that I had seen Mingoes as they were leaving the valley, for I felt sure that the whole story would be doubted, and that my reputation for truthfulness would be injured. When a few days later the body of Long

Arrow was discovered by a fishing party from our command, I pretended as great surprise as anyone, and secretly hoped that no other bodies would be found. None other than this was found, fortunately, nor have I ever heard of that band of Min-goes again, from that day to this.

;

## CHAPTER XXIV

### FROM AUGUST NINTH TO DECEMBER FIRST

**W**ERE the task less painful, I could at this time give you a detailed account of all that transpired from August 9th to December 1st of the year 1779, so far as Clinton's command was concerned, for at intervals I wrote up a daily diary, but both space and my emotions forbid it. Even now, after the lapse of nearly sixty years, I have never yet reached that callous state of feeling where I could, without pain, recount all the doings of that awful raid. That it was justifiable and necessary I do not deny, but you must take into consideration the fact, that for nearly two years—from July of 1774, to April of 1776, I lived boy and man, among this people. They were ever kind to me, especially the Oneidas, whom I looked upon as brothers.

There was never a more softly beautiful, nor yet a more fertile region in all that has since become our great domain, than this we were now sent out to lay waste. From the lake Otsego to the east, to Niagara at the west, from Wyalusing at the extreme south, to the many castles all along south of Ontario and adown the Mohawk, every river or lake valley had its garden spots or more extensive farms, and all were of great fertility. The Iroquois I have

shown you in their character of warriors and blustering blood-letting braggarts. Just prior to the war, however, they were farmers, peaceful hunters and trappers. Some few were in trade. Thanks to the labors of such men as good Dominie Kirkland, Gideon Hawley who preceded him, and others I might mention, their savage instincts had been in a great measure subdued, and they were fast learning the arts and industries of civilized life. Could the war have been avoided, I doubt not but that they would within half a century have become amalgamated by marriage and business with the whites and that the hands which through that awful war tore the bleeding scalps from the head of old and young alike, would have guided the plow; the voice so often raised in the blood-curdling war cry, would have been heard in prayer to and praise of the true God.

I need not fear contradiction, when I state that they were farmers, for the official reports of Generals Sullivan and Clinton show that on this one raid, we destroyed more than two hundred thousand bushels of corn alone. I would add, that I believe we destroyed an equal quantity of other cereals combined, and as for fruit trees and vines,—I am quite certain half a million were cut down, girdled or dug up. The command had been: "Make a clean sweep. Leave neither shelter nor sustenance;" and our orders were carried out to the letter. We burned hundreds of houses with glazed windows; thousands of shacks, shanties and permanent wigwams. We did not take human life unless resistance was offered, but the stern necessities of war

often compelled us to leave old men, women and little children, in a condition that meant a long journey, or death from starvation. Flocks and herds once so abundant—during the years 1774-5 I have seen five hundred head of horses alone, pasturing on Queen Esther's flats, at the Susquehanna and Chemung—had been largely driven from the country, but the few horses and cattle remaining, we confiscated or slaughtered.

At the outset of our raid, Iroquois lads of tender age, were converted into Indian runners, and the news was swiftly carried west along the crooked Susquehanna and south and north along its various branches, even into the lake country of central New York. Alarmed by these reports, every Indian, young and old, that could well travel, fled with their portable possessions westward and north to the great and lesser lake country, while the very old, the very young and some few doubters, settled down in stoical despair or disregard to await our coming. The destruction of Okwaga, under our own Colonel Butler in October of 1778, and of Onondaga under Colonel Goose Van Schaick, in April of 1779, should have warned them of the widespread destruction that we were bent upon, but it did not seem to do so, and I do not believe one Indian in a hundred realized the extent of the campaign planned until we met Sullivan and his command, just west of the junction of the Susquehanna and Chenango, and with an army of four thousand or more began our march and spoliation westward. I base my conclusions on the character of the resistance offered, for we met practically no opposition, until after the two

armies had joined forces and did not lose ten men, except by accident, until then.

With three men in charge of each batteau and nearly one thousand afoot, we gained an early start from Otsego lake, the morning of August 9th, and made fair progress down the winding valley of the Susquehanna. There was no hurry and the devious route of the river gave ample opportunity for scouting parties to thoroughly beat up the country. At nightfall, an evening gun was fired, for we had two aboard the batteaux, and having picketed extremely well, we invariably rested with great comfort. We reached Okwaga the fifth day after starting, having come about seventy-five miles, destroying on our way, Yankams, Albout or Alcout, Unadilla, Cuna-hunta, and several smaller villages of Iroquois and Tories, as well as many individual farms and cabins, together with growing crops and stores. Although Colonel Butler had destroyed Okwaga the October before, we found some few of the ancient houses remaining in the outskirts of this settlement and at least a score of new buildings of all kinds on or about the foundations of those Butler had razed or burned. There was also a vast amount of growing corn, potatoes and other crops, all of which, together with every hut that could give shelter, was cut, decimated and burned. It was a pitiful sight, was all this ruin. As we marched on toward Tuscarora, three miles below, I looked back across the blackened, desolate valley, noted the monster apple trees, girdled and dying, some even yet bearing their burden of nearly grown fruit and mourned at the spoliation I had helped to create. Such is the havoc of

From August Ninth to December 219

war. I pray God, this fair country may never see such another. Tuscarora (on the present site of Windsor, N. Y.), Shawhiango, a mile below, Inga-ren (now Great Bend, Pa.), Chinango (now Chenango, N. Y.)—all these as well as the intervening country, we ravaged within the next three days.



## CHAPTER XXV

### DEATH

**B**EFORE we left Okwaga it had been intimated to me that I was to be sent on out towards Queen Esther's village to look for the advance guard of Sullivan's army. Major Church with the Fourth Pennsylvania regiment had been out several miles westward in the hope of meeting them, but returned before our army was ready to start, reporting that he had been unable to see a sign of any of Sullivan's scouts. Col. Alden and Major Parr, together with other officers, seemed to think it quite necessary that a small body of scouts, knowing the country well, should be sent on ahead, lest before Clinton and Sullivan formed a union of their forces, our smaller army be surprised by a large force of Indians and be driven back or exterminated. I was the man of their choice, but as I declined to take from Murphy his rightful station as chief of scouts, it was finally decided that he should go as chief and I as his second, with the understanding that if it became necessary to cover the country more widely, we were to divide our forces, he commanding one detachment, I another. It therefore happened that we took the hill route across to the mouth of the Chenango, while the main army followed around by the river, which here bends far to

the south, with Ingaren or Great Bend at its extreme southern sweep.

We reached Corn Ground island at the junction of the Susquehanna and Chenango without incident, and as there was no large village nearer than Chenango four miles to the north or Chugnutts at the mouth of the Chocanut, eight miles west, we expected to find traces of the foe in that locality, for this was an important meeting place or rendezvous. Corn Ground island, some years since destroyed by floods as I am informed, was at this time an important camping and feeding ground. On this island, for a hundred years or more, there had been a very fertile cornfield, the nearby villages sending detachments each year, to catch the great run of shad which here struggled over the rifts of both rivers. They carried the fish to the island, and with a fish and a few grains of corn to each hill, planted the entire island for use during the fall hunting and fishing season. We found that the island had not been planted this year, and were deliberating near its north side as to our future course, when from out of the willows fringing the main shore came a shot which barely missed three of us.

We sprang to our feet and soon saw a large, light colored Tuscarora, whom I immediately recognized as Cat's Eye, the son of Tamalaqua, taking second aim at us. Murphy, ever quickest of sight, shot first and we saw Cat's Eye fall, blood running from a wound in his head. Murphy, John Rush, David Ehleron and I ran up the island toward the rifts, that we might wade across and rout out his followers, if he had any, while the eleven remaining men of our detachment, took to cover and watched him

as he lay struggling near the river's brink. We had barely entered the ford, when we heard a shout from our companions, and looking down the river saw an Indian girl dragging the big fellow into a bark canoe which she had produced from somewhere among the brush. Murphy raised his rifle to shoot her, an act that the eleven seemed loath to do, and I knocked it up and remonstrated with him. I had recognized the girl as Katsistakwast or the Wild Flower, Cat's Eye's youngest daughter and a former playmate of Owaimee. Murphy was furious, and I believe that had any one else than I interfered, he would have been shot without ceremony. Rush, who was of my way of thinking, quieted Murphy somewhat, and we ran down the river in the hope of capturing the girl. She was too quick for us, however, and we saw her swiftly paddle around the point and up into the Chenango. Just north was an impenetrable thicket, and we made a detour across the point to avoid this, coming out on the Chenango nearly a half mile above, where we climbed one of the two great twin elms standing on opposite sides of the river, about where the present bridge of the village of Binghamton crosses. Indeed, the elms are yet standing. Here, while perched in this tree, we saw Wild Flower coming close along shore, and as she paddled through beneath us, with what we supposed to be Cat's Eye's body lying prone in the canoe, it was with the utmost difficulty that we again prevented Murphy firing upon her. My idea was that the girl would lead us to the hiding place of the savages, but she escaped us among the islands above and we saw no more of her.

For some minutes after Wild Flower's disappearance, Murphy was furious; but he finally cooled off and rejoining our comrades, we returned to our deliberations. It was evident that there were no other Indians in close proximity, but that they were not so very far from us, either west or south, we were quite certain. It was finally decided that Murphy, Rush, Weston and the rest, should keep on west, while I made a detour to the north, meeting them at Owagea, now Owego, N. Y., the following day.

It was about two hours before sunset, when I struck out and my course was northwest, just back of a high headland, jutting out from the chain of low mountains along the west bank of the Chenango. A little lake or pond, about one mile north of this hill, was my first stopping place, and here I ate my supper. I had travelled some sixteen or eighteen miles that day, but as the evening came on cool, and as I had still before me some two hours of daylight, I determined to proceed farther,—a few miles back into the hills for a safe sleeping place at least.

I had not left the lake a mile behind, when I struck a trail recently made. In fact, it must have been made that day, for the heavy rain of the early morning had not obliterated it. Where it crossed a little swale, I judged by the signs I there found in the soft muck that at least fifty Indians and one or more white men had gone along that way. The track of the white men I picked out, by reason of the heavier pressure on heel and a straight ahead, rather than toed-in impression of the entire foot. That it was dangerous for one man to follow so many, I well knew, but the size of the party, proved the importance of ascertaining its intentions. A mile farther

up the narrow lateral valley and now well among the hills, I noted another track or tracks, coming in from the north—the trail of a man and a huge cat.

From the size of the moccasined footprint, I knew that Tamalagua must be ahead, and as no other Indian or white man of my acquaintance, had so strange a follower, I felt sure that I was following both him and his cougar. I also reasoned that as he never travelled until after sundown, he could not be far ahead. I proceeded therefore with the greatest caution. In two places I found where he had stepped atop the trail left by one of the party ahead, and thus knew that he was following it. The trail bore northwestward, as we proceeded, and I judged that the party was making for the foot of Cayuga, which they could not well reach before noon of the following day or later, even though they travelled all night. I had not now in excess of an hour of twilight, and as they might stop at any time or place, I kept a keen outlook lest I stumble upon them. I was now coming into a very rough country, covered with small timber and traversed by many winding streams of varied size. That I was four or five miles north of the ordinary river route, I was well aware, and whether the party ahead was making for the lake by a cut across country, or for some rendezvous from which they might sweep forth and strike our army, it was my business to ascertain, and that as quickly as I could, so as to report.

Just at the latest twilight, as I made over a round hill, I fancied I saw a movement in the underbrush in the brow of the hill ahead. I dropped to the ground and lay without motion. It was well I did so, for a few minutes later, I dimly descried Tamala-

qua, his cat at his heels, toiling up the opposite slope. The pair went on over the ridge, and I followed. As I surmounted this ridge, I saw the last of the file which I had been following, winding around the hillside, a half mile beyond. Tamalaqua and his cat were in the valley below, not a quarter of a mile behind, and about the same distance in advance of me. When he had gone over out of sight, I hurried down and up, but from the next elevation could not make out any moving object. It was plain that the party and its first pursuer had turned either to the right or left, and I judged they had gone into camp near by; at all events, I did not care to show myself on that side the hill, until darkness actually came on. I therefore crawled cautiously on my hands and knees, to the highest point of this knoll, as cautiously climbed a spreading, thick-limbed oak, and having comfortably ensconced myself in a crotch near its top, carefully scanned all the sombre landscape, in the hope that I might detect the glimmer of a campfire.

It was growing very dark, but I knew that the moon, now at its full, would be up within an hour. The summer night was without a breeze, the leaves hung without motion, and the myriad sounds of forest life were about me. At intervals the lonesome hoot of an owl came from a nearby hill, and a whippoorwill sent up its monotonous cry, some distance down a creek valley to the south. Twice I heard the long-drawn howl of a wolf. The animal was at least two miles distant, and was alone, for there was no answer.

Wearied by my long day's tramp, my eyes closed and an instant later I should have slept, when I

was startled into keen wakefulness by the breaking of a dry limb, as if some heavy body had stepped upon it. It was almost directly beneath my tree, but whether man or beast, I could not discern, because of the deep gloom below. I strained both eyes and ears, but could see nothing, nor did I hear anything more, save a faint rustle, as the object glided through the brush, along the hill side. Even that faint sound soon died away, and except that I heard what seemed the far distant hum of subdued voices, utter silence held sway for a long time. Both the whippoorwill and the owl had ceased their calls now, and—But hark! What was that? Human voices surely this time, borne from just behind the hill, by the gentle breeze that within the last few minutes had commenced swaying the tree tops. It was fitful and faint, and almost as soon as it came, died away. But it came again. This time louder. It was unmistakably a white man's voice, thin and penetrating:

“What's that thing there in the brush, Captain? My God! What a cat! \* \* \* Yes I will shoot too!” and the spiteful crack of a rifle not a hundred yards distant, rent the stillness and awoke all the slumbering echoes. These had hardly commenced to roll when I heard a stentorian cry right on the side hill beneath my tree—a roar of commingled grief and rage. There was a rush through the brush, a heavy blow and quick thereafter a fierce struggle, in which many human beings seemed participating. Just before the report of the rifle, the rim of the round moon had appeared over the high hill behind me, and now half the valley below, lay bathed in its mellow radiance. The eastern slope,

on the brow of which I sat, was yet in darkness, but the opposite height was fast lighting up. The struggle had commenced in the darkness, but now, up the hillside surged the mad conflict. There was no further sound of rifle, no swish of knife or thud of tomahawk, but up the ascent swarmed the struggling contestants, like demons from out a pit. As they scrambled along, the moonbeams scintillating on their naked limbs, I could see that all were apparently endeavoring to get at one man, and that he, with a limp, helpless burden across his left shoulder, was keeping them back with a club, which he wielded with his right hand.

It was Tamalagua I judged, from the outlines of the gigantic form and the gleam of the moonlight on hair and beard. Half way up the hillside was a ledge of rock, some twenty feet in height, extending fifty yards or more along north and south. Near its centre was an indentation, or the cropping out of the ledge—I could not determine which—causing a shadow beneath. He was making for that. Before it was a level spot, several feet each way and clear of trees or brush. The giant gained this point considerably ahead of his pursuers and running back across it, cast his burden down against the wall and into the deep shadow. Three bounds brought him back to the brink of the ledge and there he stood, like a great gorilla at bay. His club, which he flourished as a lesser man might a hoe handle, looked like the limb of an oak, wrenched from its parent stem, and being three or four inches through and five or six feet in length, was a formidable weapon. The redskin venturing within reach of its terrible sweep, was a dead man, and all seemed to



realize this danger. Once the band spread along the side hill like a fan and endeavored to close in on him, but with a roar like that of an angry lion, and with far more agility than I had supposed him capable of, he dashed from side to side of his retreat, scattering the band in all directions. They tumbled and rolled down the hillside and had not brought up, when he began shouting. He was using the Tuscarora tongue, and I listened.

“The Tory murderer is Tamalaqua’s captive. No one else shall have him! Not even our Tekarihogea! He shall burn at the stake! Splinters of fat pine shall be thrust into his flesh and lighted! The blow Tamalaqua gave has but put him asleep! Keep back! Ye are Tamalaqua’s friends! He would not harm ye! But the warrior that steps on this ledge shall never stay long enough to sing his death song!”

Then I heard another voice—Brant’s this time. He had advanced nearer the ledge than the rest and stood there in the bright moonlight, calm and collected. “Tamalaqua knows not what he would do. He must give up the white captive, who is a king’s man and our brother. Thayendanega, your war chief, commands it.”

“And Tamalaqua refuses. He is not on the war path. He has never taken sides, and it would have been better had his brother, the great war chief, followed Skenando’s counsel. Even now, two armies of the Boston men are marching to lay waste the Iroquois country. Tamalaqua has hunted by night for his own meat, and many times has he fed the old men and the children Thayendanega’s warriors left unprotected. He has harmed no man,

yet when he seeks the camp of those who should have been his friends, this renegade, this child stealer, this woman murderer, slays poor Midgard. Tamalaqua has long known his other crimes—his theft of Quedar, the Scotch boy, his murder of his own father, Hans Diehl, his murder—”

But I heard nothing more for an instant, for my heart was leaping and pounding, my head whirling at the mention of those names by this crack-brained Tuscarora. My name was among the rest. What else did he know? Did he know my parents? I was now so excited that I nearly fell from the tree, and had I been upon the ground, I fear that I must have run down the hill and up to where he stood. An instant later, however, I had in part recovered my self control, and as the blood and fire left my eyes, I strained them and my ears as well, to see and hear what was going on. Brant was now talking, and although he could not see up on the ledge and was not aware of any movement there, I was positive that I, from my elevated position, could see something creeping stealthily upon Tamalaqua. It had already emerged from the deep shadow, and as it arose behind him, I could see that it was a small man, lithe, wiry and cat-like in his motions. A naked knife gleamed wickedly in his hand for an instant as he raised it above his head. Before I could draw breath, it had descended, and with a roar like that of some wild beast, Tamalaqua sprang far out over the ledge, to go rolling, tumbling down to the place where Brant stood. As he came, the mob fled like frightened children, to the shadow below.

The murderer I now recognized as Beacraft. He had evidently lost his knife, having had it wrenched

from his hand by the sudden leap of his stricken victim. As he was climbing down, I saw Brant advance and draw the blade from between the shoulders of the old Tuscarora. Then, as Beacraft hesitated about coming nearer, Brant called to him and the two rolled the giant over. As they did so, Tamalaqua made a quick snatch at Beacraft, caught him by an ankle and struggled to his feet, upsetting the wriggling little wretch and pulling him to him as an ordinary man might have drawn a child. With his other hand, the giant now closed on Beacraft's neck, and thus holding him by one leg and his neck, raised him high above his head as if to dash him to earth again. Had his strength held out, he must have killed him by impact with the rough rocks around, for Brant offered no aid, and there was no one else near enough to prevent. But it was with a stronger foe that the grand old giant was now battling. Death had its grip upon him. He had raised the assassin with apparent ease, but now he staggered about in a vain effort to dash him to earth again, with a force sufficient to accomplish his purpose. The feat was beyond his strength. He stood erect once, then weakened and wavered, arose again, a second time showed signs of failing, a second time stood erect for at least six heart-beats, and then realizing his inability, gave a horrible gurgling cry of despair and limply fell, Beacraft atop of him. Thank God! Beacraft was yet spared to me.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### A MIDNIGHT VISIT

**H**AD there been one Tuscarora in that war party, I think that Beacraft's life must have paid the penalty of his murder of noble old Tamalaqua and his strange companion. As it was, the mixed band of Senecas, Cayugas and Mohawks were very wroth. That they were much excited and dreaded the consequences of this act of their white ally, was plainly apparent, for they seemed to have forgotten that they were in a dangerous country, were indeed, for that reason, without a campfire, and that silence and stealth was the word. All were jabbering now, each in his tribal tongue. Beacraft seemed to fear them, for I saw him slink to one side and there stand as if undecided whether to stay or run. Brant, meanwhile, was examining the fallen giant to see if any breath of life remained. He apparently found none, for he straightened up and in authoritative tones commanded silence. What next was said I could not determine, for the voices of all were lowered, some even speaking in whispers as I believed, for I could see their gestures, when not even the murmur of their voices reached me.

All was now activity in the moonlit valley below, and one of the most weird sights I ever saw ; a fitting

ending to Tamalaqua's life, was being enacted. The body of the warrior was first carried to the ledge above, by four of the largest of the band, and a heavy burden it seemed. Then from out of the shadows below, came four more, two at either end of a long, stiff pole, on which had been slung the carcass of the cat, Midgard. Slowly, and with great effort, they toiled up the steep hillside, and at the ledge every man of the four seemed exerting himself as tremendously as did the Scandinavian God Thor, when he attempted to lift from the earth this great cat's namesake. The cat's carcass was deposited within four feet of the body of its master, whose bow, arrows, and even the great club he had used when defying them, were placed carefully beside him. Huge boulders from the base of the cliff were next rolled over and about the bodies, and when all these obtainable had been used, others smaller were brought up from the bed of the stream below. It must have taken two hours of hard work for that band to perform this labor, for the heaps were very large. All worked faithfully, save Brant, who stood all this time on the brink of the ledge in the full moonlight, his arms folded, his head bent as if in deep thought. I have said all but he assisted. I should have excepted Beacraft, who slunk off by himself, like the outcast he evidently was.

The task of sepulture finally finished, I saw Brant wave his arm, and heard him bid all go to their rest at the other side of the glen, while he stood guard over them and the newly made cairns. After they had departed, I saw Beacraft sneaking up toward the ledge. At first, I feared he was bent on some treachery to the chief, but if so, which I now doubt,

Brant saw him almost as soon as I did, and I heard him call out to him to retire to his rest. The wretch whined out something about danger to himself, when Brant in evident anger reproached him for his cowardice, assured him not a follower of his would touch him unless by command, and bade him begone. Like a whipped cur, Beacraft slunk away, and when, having descended my tree and worked my way around to the head of the glen, I looked down toward the eastern bank of the little stream, I saw him rolled in his blanket a little distance from the rest, and apparently asleep.

The ledge of cairns on which Brant yet stood, was fully two hundred yards from the sleepers, and the somewhat foolhardy scheme of an interview with him laid hold upon and possessed me. The desire was so strong, that I did not stop to think of the danger, and in a short time I had stolen up to within twenty yards of him. That he did not dream of the approach of friend or foe, I was certain, for he was slowly pacing back and forth along the brink of the ledge. His head was bent, and as he made the turn nearest me, I could hear him muttering to himself. That he was nevertheless alert, I was confident, for once, when I jarred a small tree, ever so slightly, he turned quick as a flash, and for some time gazed steadily in my direction. I lay like a log and plainly heard the beating of my own heart, which it seemed he must also hear. Finally he turned and resumed his walk again. I knew it must now be near midnight, and that if ever men slept soundly, those tired Iroquois below me must be thus sleeping. Twice did he lengthen his walk and come near me, and twice did my cour-

age fail me. The third time in a low, heavy voice, I uttered the one word: "Captain!"

He whirled about like a startled stag, and fearing he was about to spring from the ledge and call to his followers, I gathered myself to spring to my feet and run. However, he did not do more than start and then slowly turning looked as before, steadily in the direction of my hiding place.

"Do not be alarmed, Captain! It is I—Quedar. Hans Diehl's big boy Quedar, and I am alone."

"Quedar? Come out in moonlight. Captain want see you," he replied in a low voice.

"No, Captain. Some of your followers might awake and see me. You come here in the shadow."

"Quedar Boston man now. Heap strong. Him win great honor if he capture or kill Thayendanega. Better go 'way. Thayendanega no want hurt Quedar. If Captain raise war whoop, Quedar captured, sure."

"Ha! Ha! Captain. You don't know me," I returned derisively. "The first yell means your death. Then I'd run. You haven't a warrior in that band that knows this country so well as I, and not one that can keep pace with me, one mile or forty. But, Captain, on my sacred word of honor, I do not wish to harm you. I want a talk with you. Your scalp I could have taken, any time for an hour past; and it would be worth a thousand pounds to me to take it, too, but I shall never strike you from behind. You did me a kindness once—when Butler wanted to roast me. My Injun training won't let me forget those things."

"What Quedar want talk about?"

"That devil's agent Beacraft, Captain. Come over here in the brush! Don't be afraid!"

"Thayendanega know not fear. His promise sacred too. Quedar come out. If braves wake up, he no be harmed. He have half hour start any warrior. Thayendanega promise that."

"All right, Captain!" I replied, as I stepped out in the moonlight and extended my hand. He looked behind me, then behind himself, before taking it.

"Quedar grow like young oak. Him look heap strong," he remarked, as he looked up in my face and down my length of arm, body and limb.

"Yes, Captain. I have matured considerably—grown older you know. I'm the largest man on the border, I guess, now that Tamalaqua is dead."

He gave a little start as he realized that I knew all that had passed that evening. I paid no attention to his apparent agitation, but relying on his promise of a safe departure, pursued my conversation as if two hundred miles rather than two hundred yards distant from fifty or more blood-thirsty enemies.

"And *you* have grown older," I ventured. "Really, Captain, you look as if you had lived twenty-five years since I saw you, only a little over three years ago. I fear you are undertaking too much. It's telling on you."

Brant made no reply to this, and for some little time after I had made my comments on his appearance, sat scowling and silent. I was not sure that I had not offended him, but was soon reassured by his laying his hand on my shoulder and inquiring in a broken voice:



"Quedar! What can Thayendanega do for you?"

"I want another favor from you, Captain. I want Beacraft. You despise him. He is of little use to the king. Give him to me?"

"What Quedar want the wolf for?"

"That's a good name for him, Captain. You can guess what I want him for, but I'll tell you plainly. I want to tie his hands, drive him before me to some lonely spot, tie him to a tree and roast his shins until he tells me who and what I am—why and where he stole me as a child and all about my parents."

"Thayendanega try and make him tell, but he won't. He hate Whigs—Quedar worse'n all.

"Give him to me? I'll make him tell."

"No. He king's man, Quedar."

"He's nobody's man. He's a wolf—a human hyena. Let me have him?"

"He king's man under Captain Brant's command."

"That may be, but I want him."

"How bad? You give route Sullivan's army?"

I flew out now. "Captain Brant, if you insult me like that again, I'll knock you further than you did me the day my uncle was murdered. What do you take me for?"

"You take Thayendanega for traitor and ask him to give you king's man. You young fool, Quedar."

Despite my keen disappointment, I laughed. "Captain," said I, arising and extending my hand, "forgive me? *You* certainly are not a fool, and I believe you are an honorable gentleman. Find out

what you can for me, will you? When shall I see you again?"

"You and Sullivan see me soon, when no one expect," he remarked significantly, and I knew then that he was planning to give us battle. He held my hand some seconds as we stood there, and his voice was most earnest as he finally said:

"Good-bye, Quedar. Be brave, straight—crooked stick no make strong staff in war or peace. If Thayendanega live and Wolf lives, you know all some day. Mebbe soon. Now go. Warriors wake bymeby."

I shook his hand and left him standing there, the mellow light of the summer moon showing his worn, soiled attire, the careworn look on his strong Mohawk face, yet a fire in his eye such as I have seen in the eyes of but few men.

As I stole away through the woods to the southwest those words of Marc Antony came to me again and again:—"This is the noblest Roman of them all."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### A MOMENTOUS LETTER

**N**EAR Owagea I narrowly escaped running upon a large war party of mixed Senecas and Onondagas moving north. I retreated two or three miles that night, and had as close an escape from another party yet larger. They were gathering from all directions, and I now realized that I was in a very dangerous country. Striking south again, I avoided the first party mentioned, reached the river, waded a half mile east to hide my trail, and slept that night in a willow thicket on a large island, about eight miles east of Owagea. I was so worn out that I slept until long after daylight and probably it would have been even later had I not been awakened by a third party, moving westward in canoes and along shore. This party seemed fleeing from the villages farther east, and I conjectured that our forces were at work near the junction of the Susquehanna and Chenango. Possibly some distance west. I did not know it then, but this party was from Chugnutts or Chocaunut, which had been destroyed the night before. Not daring to build a fire to cook my breakfast, I ate a quantity of parched corn paste with raw fresh-water clams for meat, after which I travelled east along the south bank of the river, reaching the com-

bined armies near the present town of Union, Broome county, without incident.

Murphy and his command had come in twelve hours ahead of me, having travelled by night, and had almost as narrow escapes as had I. I reported having seen three large bands, and my conclusions that we were about to meet resistance; but on the advice of Murphy, to whom I told every detail of my adventures, I did not mention my interview with Brant. I need hardly state that Murphy was interested in the details of the death of Tamalagua, and even more in the probability of Beacraft's knowing of my ancestry.

"Come to luk at ye, Pather, ye do look Scotch an' at toimes, whin ye've done somethin' smaart, I've had it in me moind ye might have a thrifle av Oirish blood in yere veins. But then, Scot is nixt to Oirish annyhow, so ye have somethin' to thank God fer."

It was now the general opinion that an engagement was imminent, and the entire army moved westward. General Hand's skirmishers ahead. Murphy and his men had burned Owagea, and the following week we advanced to Tioga fortifications, where two hundred and fifty men of Sullivan's own, awaited us. These fortifications were now strengthened, the stores of the army and the sick were left there under guard of a strong body of cautious, well-disciplined men.

At Tioga fort, I found Mr. Kirkland, who had come up the Susquehanna with Sullivan, having joined him at Easton. To join the army, Mr. Kirkland had come up from Philadelphia, leaving that city June 15th. He seemed greatly overjoyed at

meeting me, and I noted an anxiety in his manner as he questioned me about my doings of the past three months, which led me to believe he had heard some report concerning me.

"And you have not been in disgrace of any kind, Quedar?" he finally asked.

"Disgrace, sir! What do you mean? Why should I have been in disgrace?"

"You were not put under guard at Schoharie for drunkenness, and you were not driven from the fort by Major Woolsey's orders?"

"I driven from the fort by Major Woolsey's orders? Why, sir! What do you mean? While Major Woolsey and I are not the best of friends, perhaps, I have never resisted his authority in any way, irksome as have been the tasks he has imposed upon me. As for drunkenness, you know as well as I that I have never tasted liquor as a beverage. Why! Where did you get such information? Here! Hold on a minute! Do you know Lieutenant Erkuries Beatty? There he goes now—near General Clinton's tent. I'll call him. Lieutenant! Oh Lieutenant! Come over here a minute, will you? Do you know the Rev. Mr. Kirkland? Gentlemen, let me make you acquainted. Now Mr. Kirkland, just question this young gentleman, or any one else you choose, while I retire."

As I strolled off down towards the river, leaving them together, I occasionally glanced back, and from Beatty's red face, I judged him to be very indignant about something. Soon they beckoned me, and I went back to them.

"Quedar," began Mr. Kirkland, "I owe you an apology for having for one moment entertained a

suspicion of your wrongdoing, and, believe me, the suspicion has given me great pain. I am now going to make a clean breast of the whole matter—that is, if you will promise me you will not fight a duel or do anything else as rash.”

“Don’t you make any such promise, Quedar!” interrupted Beatty hotly. “Make him tell you what he knows, and when you get back to Schoharie, do you twist that villain’s neck.”

I paid little heed to Beatty. Somehow, I suspected what was coming. “Indeed, Mr. Kirkland, I don’t believe in duelling. I can therefore promise that I won’t go out with any man. If I have been traduced, however, I may make the traducer eat his words or take a thrashing. I’m not over patient of temper, you know.”

“But bloodshed, Quedar! You’ll promise me?”

“Nothing more than a pair of black eyes,” I replied laughing.

“Read that then,” and he handed me a large sheet of paper written on both sides in Major Woolsey’s dashing hand. I took it and began reading. It was addressed to Jason Horne and was marked “confidential.” I will not quote all of it, but here are some extracts:

“It is with keen pain, sir, yet from a high sense of duty, that I set about opening your eyes to this shameful state of affairs. Before we left Philadelphia, I had a suspicion that this big blustering brute had designs on this unsuspecting girl, and was bent on compromising her and ruining her reputation, if he could not do more. In his way, he is the most artful fellow I ever saw. He assumes a sturdy honesty and the possession of a moral character, such as we here, who know him well, and who see his repulsive daily life, know to be as far from him as is heaven from hell. I

am aware that he writes frequently to this young lady, in whom both you and I,—you as her guardian and I as her affianced husband,—have such a deep interest. I am also aware that it is his common practice to boast of his connection with your family, and to show her letters to his boon companions—half civilized, drunken border ruffians and women of the camp, as well as Indians, for with such does he consort here. He is the most arrant coward and unblushing braggart that ever I met. He is half drunk or entirely so, most of the time, has no regular connection with our army, other than as a hanger-on, and I have had at times to put him in limbo, for his misdeeds. Sooner or later I shall take him in the most flagrant of his misdeeds and have him drummed from camp. The little smattering of an education you and some well-meaning missionaries have given him, renders him doubly dangerous, and enables him to assume the airs of a gentleman when he wishes, when as a fact we all know him to be of the lowest origin and possessed of all those traits which those of illegitimate parentage and mixed breed are so prone to display.

“I say to you now, sir, that this is a painful duty I am performing, but nevertheless, I do demand that you write him at once, order him to cease his writing to your ward, and also insist that he do not visit your house in future. Inasmuch as I am not a man of his brute strength, and being a gentleman and an officer cannot consistently meet him at the sword’s point, I further request that you keep this information I have given you to yourself; that you do your duty as I have pointed out the necessity of it being done, and that you do not involve me in this trouble further. If you have any doubts as to the statements I have made as to his true character, I can at any time furnish you the affidavits of ex-Sheriff White of Tryon county, who held a warrant for him for a long time and Benjamin Beacraft, Esq., who has known him from a child. I could, of course, risk my life at his hands, and rather than see the young lady I adore compromised by him, I will do this, but the way I have pointed out is best, and I trust you will pursue it. He is now about to leave with Clinton’s command, on an expedition against the Indians of western New York. Let us hope he will, on this expedition, end his

miserable life. Indeed, I have strong inclination to inform General Clinton, as to my suspicion that he is secretly in the pay of the British, but I may not do that, as I have not full proof. Meanwhile, I urge that you lose no time in intercepting any letters he may send Miss Edith, and that you use discreet measures to cut off this disgraceful connection with your house."

"And did my friend Jason Horne give you this letter to show to me, Mr. Kirkland?"

"He did, Quedar,—that is, if I found those charges false."

"And does Miss Edith know of this?"

"She has seen the letter and I have one from her for you."

"With instructions to deliver it if you found Woolsey's letter untrue, I suppose," I supplied bitterly.

"Indeed, Quedar! But there you are mistaken. She had more spirit and more faith in you, than I supposed any woman could have in mortal man. Those offered affidavits, one from a sheriff, too, were a poser to Jason, but she would not even consider them, further than to say that the men making them were paid rascals. I then recollected that White was in bad odor up in the valley and was quite sure he had been removed for some shady work, done at the dictation of the Johnsons or Butlers. "Beacraft, Esq.," I could not place, and I told her so, but she declared he was a perjured villain, and from what I have since learned of him, I rather guess she was not far from right. She's a very superior young woman, Quedar."

I took the letter he then held out to me in my eager hands and broke the seal:



"DEAR BROTHER QUEDAR "

Such an awful story has come to me. Made up from whole cloth I know, but it made me weep to think that enemies of yours could be so cowardly, malicious and so cruel. Believe me Quedar, I trust in you and shall ever be glad to hear from you or see you. I am sure you are a noble Christian gentleman and not guilty of even one of those terrible acts, your enemies charge you with. Something tells me that you have not done, nor will ever do, anything that you would be ashamed to have me know. I for one, wish to see you very much, and I am sure that Aunt Abigail and Uncle Jason do. Quedar, there is one woman in the world that often thinks of you; that believes you one of the truest gentlemen in the world; that prays daily for your physical, moral and spiritual welfare. I believe,—aye, I cannot but believe, that my prayers are answered. Write me.

EDITH."

I hastened to my tent, letter in my hand, and catching up the first material that came to hand—my writing paper was a page out of an old account book I had found, wrote my mind—laid bare my inmost soul before this trusting girl.

"TIOGA POINT, *August 22nd, 1779, Sunday.*

MY DEAR EDITH :

Your precious letter, now two months and seven days old, just at hand, through the kindness of our friend Mr. Kirkland. Edith, dear, brave, true little woman, I love you. Forgive me, but I must speak. I love you better than I love my life. I have no right perhaps, to tell you this. I had thought that I would not, but I cannot help it, it is wrung from me. I know that by birth and station I am unworthy of you. I have not even a name to offer you. I do not ask any love in return, save such as a sister may give a brother. If ever you meet an upright honest gentleman of your station in life, whom you can love well enough, I pray you let not this declaration of mine stand in your path. Marry him and I will be your friend and

his. I need not deny the cowardly accusations that have been sent to you, for I see by this dear letter of yours, and I know from what Mr. Kirkland has said, that you do not believe them. Thank God, they are totally false. Believe me Edith,—I will never, no never, do anything that I would be ashamed to have you know. Your prayers, your sublime faith shall, as they have for more than two years past, keep me. Believe that above all else I shall strive to remain pure in life, that I may some day be worthy to receive a welcome from the loyal little girl who believes in me.

Forgive my presumption in telling you that I love you; that I always shall. I promise you that I will never again say or write as much, unless,—ah unless—. If you can continue to believe in me, to give me the precious boon of trust that you have bestowed, I shall ask no more, but remain ever grateful, ever your

BROTHER QUEDAR.”

“N. B. I am going four or five miles down the river to overtake a runner who left with important express an hour before I met Mr. Kirkland. QUEDAR.”

That runner I overtook twelve miles down, and came back in the night, tired as a dog, but somehow more like a man than ever before. My conscience told me I had not done wrong.

The next morning, the combined armies, nearly or quite four thousand strong, moved on westward. Under several different commanders, detachments of one hundred to two hundred were sent out north and south, twenty-five pioneers ahead, and every village or isolated farm was destroyed. While we had lain at Tioga, even before we reached that place, heavy rains had fallen, raising all the creeks and rivers of the region to the north, but the weather cleared as we advanced, and we had little difficulty in burning all standing buildings.

August 25th, after a three days' scout to the north and west, one of the most hazardous of that campaign, I came in to report that there were not only Indians in large force, near the village of Newtown, some twenty miles west on the Chemung—or Tioga as we always called it—but white men as well. From a high hill, three miles distant, I had seen a small body of British regulars, and another, yet larger, of Tory rangers as I judged, although I was not certain, as darkness had come on before I could overtake them. They encamped that night in a hollow near the creek back of Newtown, but being surrounded by several camps of Indians, I could not get near enough to them to be certain of their number.

Weary as I was, I volunteered to go back the way I had come and keep ahead of the army, but to this Murphy objected. "He'll do no such a thing, sor. The poor bye's that slapey now, he waves as he walks," contended Murphy, who on matters of this kind, was all through that campaign called into council. He was speaking to General Sullivan. The general argued the matter back and forth with his impetuous little countryman, and proposed sending out other men, but Murphy's advice that nothing be done that afternoon and that the army remain practically stationary was finally adopted. Meanwhile, I retired, and slept twelve hours straight. When I awoke, Murphy had matters all arranged. He and I were to go alone to a point as near Newtown as we could, to scout the country thoroughly, and to return and report to the slowly advancing army, if possible, before it reached that vicinity. Murphy insisted that they would give us battle, if at all, in the vicinity of Newtown, and from what I had seen

recently and knew of the country, I was of his opinion. This Newtown was a collection of thirty-two Indian huts or rude barns, which had been erected there, since Murphy and I had come through in the spring of 1776. In fact, I think that they were built in the fall of 1778. From what we had heard and seen, we did not believe them fortifications or even dwellings. They were mere barns for the storage of hay and other products, and were located in the very heart of a great tract of open, fertile fields and swales, formerly the territory of the Senecas. Had we come in six weeks later, these barns would probably have been filled with the rich crops yet standing in all the vast fertile valley. In my judgment, a circle four miles in diameter, with Newtown as its eastern rim, would have taken in five thousand acres of growing crops. Why we should be given battle in this region, our officers could not understand, as the Indians must know, even if their white allies did not, that the battle itself would destroy more than our detachments if unmolested could, in two days of hard work. However, they did understand when they came to know the topography of this country as I did.

At noon of the 26th, Murphy and I from the highest of the ridges, that from this great level amphitheatre seem to radiate out to all points of the compass, viewed all that region and discussed the probable as well as the possible. It was our conclusion, that there were within ten miles of us, at least one thousand two hundred Indians and British combined. It was a clear day, with a fresh breeze blowing up from the west. The morning fogs had two hours before rolled up off the tops of the high-

est ridges and joined the cumulus clouds, which appeared on all the circular horizon rolling up into the blue vault of heaven. From the valleys below, to the west and south, came up the mirror-like glare of slow-sweeping waters, here and there broken by the more brilliant glimmer of sparkling shad-rifts, or the tumbling waters of a large creek, running down from the north and bending to the east just before reaching the river. Beside the rivers, the long line of drooping willow brush, like hedges of furze along a shining highway. Next, the rich green fields of corn, not yet yellowed. Farther back, the more subdued green of grazing grounds, broken here and there by patches of undulating, waving wheat and oats. Then the wooded slopes and hills, backed by a horizon-bound sweep of mighty unbroken forest. Here and there in the great basin, wooded spurs of the low mountain ridges pushed out. In many instances, these stood out alone and detached from their parent ridge, like some round-browed, egg-shaped island. Indeed, the hill on which we stood, was one of the very largest of these, and to the northeast the river had broken through and wound around to the south again. Northeast, not three miles distant, was Newtown, so called, and near it to the north was encamped a small body of British regulars. Between it and our hill, was another body of white men, and these Murphy's phenomenal eyesight selected as Butler's rangers. Where the creek bent to the east and between it and the river, was a low ridge, ending in a point,—we were looking right over that, across the river, at Newtown, which was northwest of the bend of this creek, and while the

regulars were on the northeast side of the creek, the rangers were on the southwest side. Over on the northeast slope of the ridge, nearest us yet hidden from our sight, we supposed the Indian camp to be, but of this we were not certain. I declared that along this ridge, or the one much higher northwest, would be the battle, if at all, but Murphy thought differently. It seemed to me, that one of these, preferably the northwestern one, was the natural vantage ground, and I wondered why they were not erecting breastworks along it, as our army must pass between it and the river.

"Go on wid yer Scotch consate," broke in the impatient Murphy, who had already changed his ideas of my ancestry, to conform to Tamalagua's brief allusion. "What's the rayson the army wudn't kim across the river, go 'round the narth side o' the hill we're on an' lave thim alone? We're not huntin' Injuns. It's their crops an' castles we want."

"But we can't go that way, Tim, and I sha'n't advise it. We must go right through this side of that ridge, or along it on either side and on the northeast side of the river. This great flat off here, this side of the river and at our feet, is one vast swamp. See the water standing here and there and the tag alders and willows? I floundered through there four or five days back, and I don't want any more of it."

"That settles it, me bye. If wid thim big flat feet o' yer'n ye cudn't make it, a roodway o' batteaux wudn't let an army pass. See! Be the powers, ye're right. There's a band o' the divils at worruk along that highest ridge now. See that tree fall?"

I was forced to admit that I had seen nothing, but later on we both saw a body of axemen felling trees, and judged that fortifications of some kind were being constructed. "It's their only chance for making a good fight, for miles and miles, Tim," I remarked.

"Ye do know somethin'," he admitted, "an' if I kin kape you wid me long, I'll make a ginerol of ye yet, be gorra! I'm goin' down and across."

"You're what? Why, man, are you daft?"

"Ah! Go on! ye siven fut bane-pole. None o' ye're blackguard tongue, or I'll wallop ye. I ain't trashed ye out yit this maarnin', an' ye're gittin' sassy. Do ye sneak back if ye want to. I'm sint to find out what bedivilmint them fellys is up to," and he started down the hill. I caught his arm and held him.

"See here, Tim! I'm with you on this expedition and it's as much mine as yours. We can find out from here what they're doing, and report without risk. You've no right to go over there across the river and be captured or meet any unnecessary danger. If you're seen, even if you get away, they know that we know where to look for them and may flee, without giving us battle. Now they've been harassing us for a week past, picking off a man here and there, shooting horses and beef cattle and all that. I don't believe they've got a force that we can't whip, no matter how well they're entrenched. I don't want a battle any more than you do, nor half as much, I guess, but it's the very best thing that can happen. This is a gathering of all their forces in this region. Probably their last stand. From what you and I have seen, they can't ambush

us. Let's go back and report, and then march up and give them another Oriskany. That well done, the cause will have nothing to fear from this region for one year to come, if not as long as the war lasts."

"Right ye air, Pather. That wit o' yer'n is slowly developin' owin' to good sosity and before ye're thirty, bedad, I think—whisht! Down! ye son of a say-cook, 'fore ye're seen." I fell as he had commanded and followed him as he crawled along the brow of the hill. There was a windfall, not very far ahead, on the very brink of the topmost ledge, and with bodies bent low, we ran across the shaly crown of the hill for this shelter. We had barely reached it and crawled in under, when I saw a war plume, strangely familiar, rising from behind the mound on which we had stood not three minutes before. It was Brant, and he looked much fresher and more confident than when I last saw him, ten days before. Close behind him came Colonel John Butler, his cruel, hard old face grim as of yore, and behind him his son Walter, now so bestial in appearance that I did not at first recognize him. A leather-faced Scot, huge of bone and joint but poorly and awkwardly put together, brought up the rear. This, Murphy informed me, was the famous Captain McDonald, who declared he had Bible authority for slaughtering the babes of a rebellious people. I surveyed him well, from the crown of his dingy cocked hat to the toes of his sturdy shoon, and there and then was I tempted to do murder. Butler the younger, I had sworn to kill at the first opportunity. Here was my chance. Perhaps I could get McDonald too. I whispered my intentions to Murphy, who



had already cocked his piece and was taking aim, as he afterward told me at Brant, although I told him to kill the elder Butler.

The four leaders now stood not one hundred and fifty yards from us, side by side, pointing north and east as if discussing the location of our army. It seemed as if Providence had put them into our hands. "I take young Butler first, McDonald next, Tim," I whispered. "You do for Old Man Butler and let Brant off, will you? When I touch you with my toe, fire." I drew my sight fine on Young Butler's heavy eyebrows and was just reaching my toe for Tim, when I heard voices right below us. I paused, looked at Tim who had heard them too, and who, shaking his finger at me as if commanding silence, crawled back six feet and peered over the ledge. He came crawling back to me, his eyes like burning coals, but not the least pallor in his face, nor yet a quaver in his voice as he whispered:—

"There's a half a hunderd o' the divils not fifty yaards below, 'long the south side o' this hill, all pickin' blueberries an' jabberin' like a Jarsey town matin'."

I made no reply, but crawled farther under the windfall; thence out into the brush on the north side, he following. Within fifteen minutes we were down on the other side of the hill and comparatively safe. As we swung around the hill, we saw three bodies of white men marching out from behind the ridge. First, twelve regulars, led by an officer; next, two battalions of the Royal Greens; and following, what looked like a great number of Tory farmers and backwoodsmen. Straggling along some distance yet to the rear was a very large band

of Indians, apparently a mixture of all the tribes of the Confederacy. There were, we judged, about three hundred of the whites, and at least four times as many Indians and there were no squaws, pap-poooses or dogs following. We watched them for a time—they seemed changing camp or drilling, we could not tell which; and as all that region seemed alive with foes, white or red, we made a detour through the hills. At nightfall, we lay down upon a high ridge farther south and west, from which we could see more than a hundred camp fires. At first it seemed necessary that we go back to the vicinity of Newtown again, but as the darkness came on and the fires flashed up, we perceived all that it was important for us to know. They were felling trees, digging rifle-pits and preparing to dispute our way, along that very ridge which I had selected,—the doorway at that time, so far as an army and munitions of war were concerned, to all the rich country north and westward. To be sure, it would be possible to cut a way around through the hills and avoid them, but that was not what General Sullivan desired. Confident that he had a force sufficient to beat them, he was bent on taking the very route they were now seeking to blockade.

We reached camp and made our report Friday night. Saturday, we moved cautiously about eight miles and there rested well and put every equipment in the best order, for on the morrow, we meant to conquer or be conquered. We had come to destroy the sources of subsistence of the Tories and their Iroquois allies. If we could destroy the foe as well, so much the better.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE BATTLE OF NEWTOWN

**T**HE battle of Newtown was the final conflict with all the resistance that the Iroquois and British were able to offer against an army that had destroyed all the Iroquois country so far as that army had advanced, and that was seeking to destroy all the subsistence of a great and dangerous band of Indians and Tories to the north and west. Our commanders had wondered for two or three years prior to that summer of 1779, where all the food and supplies to support the savage horde that was so sadly afflicting us, came from. Scouts like Murphy and me had been able to answer that question and our reports, together with those of others had finally reached headquarters and brought about this raid.

The night of the 28th Sullivan called a council of all his leading officers, sent for Murphy, Boyd, Ehleron, Rush, Weston and me and for three hours asked every question that he and the other officers could think of. Boyd seemed to lack the power of comprehending the plans of the enemy, but was keen as a brier as to the minutest details of the territory he had gone through. Murphy scattered. He was voluble and while saying a great deal seemed to throw very little light on the situation. I could see that the general was dissatisfied and I longed to

speaking, but feared to push myself forward. I had briefly answered such questions as had been asked me, but had not volunteered any information. The council was about to break up, when Lieutenant Beatty gained the general's ear and began talking to him in a low tone, at the same time looking toward me. I conjectured he was repeating a conversation that I had had with him that day and wondered what was coming next.

"Peter Ehlerston, I want you. Sit down gentlemen. Lieutenant Beatty thinks this man can lay out the country and the route we should take so that we shall understand it still better. It is yet early. Let us hear him."

I was never more confused in my life. I felt as if I would sooner face the enemy than these superiors of mine.

"Don't be backward, young man. You have a good head, as Col. Alden and many of us know." It was General Clinton speaking, and his kindness reassured me. I also felt that I must acquit myself well, if I would repay my friend Beatty for his kindness. I therefore stepped to the improvised table on which had been spread paper and drawing materials, swept aside the drawings of the others and with a piece of charcoal began making a map, talking as I worked.

"Here gentlemen is the river, sweeping so and not quite so far to the south, except at one point, as some of you have drawn it. Then it sweeps to the northeast, making almost a circle, and as it runs north again, is quite near the large creek coming down from the north. This creek, bending to the east, just as the river bends, only less, runs parallel

with the river some distance and between it and the hills to the north is a low hogback or ridge, ending in a point. You all have that in mind? Off to the west and south of the big creek and river is a swamp—you will not notice it until you get into it, because it is covered with the deceiving tag alder. The army cannot go that way and if it does, will be at the mercy of whoever may hold this higher ground to the south. The route of the army must therefore be along the base of this hogback or ridge I have drawn to the northeast of the river, and on the river side. Now while it does not appear so from the southeast, nor yet from any point unless you know of this swamp, this southwest slope of this ridge is the only gateway to the level country beyond. We must pass through it and take our medicine. To the left is the river, swift and shallow, yet too deep to ford. To the right, this long ridge or hogback. The smaller valley on the other side of this hogback is narrow and hardly passable. That route if taken would be a death trap. As you military gentlemen know, narrow passes are the most easily held, and though we have force sufficient, as I believe, to rout all opposition, it is our duty to husband human life, avoid this most dangerous pass and keep to the left, the less dangerous, along the river; to also spread out over this hill and drive them before us. Their intrenchments, which are fallen trees, logs and rifle pits dug along the higher ground, run diagonally over about the middle of this ridge, from east to west; and if Brant is the general I believe him to be, he will centralize his force well on the brow of this ridge, with a thin line of riflemen well down on either side. Now he

expects we will come straggling along, our baggage and stock strung out along the broad trail next the river; our light infantry maybe, up along the creek, the other side this ridge, where it can march through two abreast, out of the mud of the trail. In that case, there will be two long helpless lines. He intends to let us get well past, when having ambushed us, he will strike the centre of either line and cutting one or both lines in two will then flank north and south and drive us into the river, or pen us up in this ravine and destroy us. I should advise proceeding as far up the river as the point of this ridge, or nearly to the ambushade, the location of which we must ascertain by skirmishers or judge of; should there halt and form in battle array on the southwest slope of the ridge and open up with scattering bands of riflemen. About two hundred yards to the rear I should plant my batteries and rake that fortification"—

"Ye gods and little fishes! Hear that rooster telling us how to handle this army, will you? How many battles has he planned"—a snicker from among the younger officers drowned the strident whisper of my critic, and I felt as if I should sink from shame. I was instantly reassured, however.

"Silence!" thundered General Sullivan springing to his feet, his eyes blazing with wrath. "I am no Braddock, I will have you know, and I rely more on brains in buckskin, than I do upon veal in gold lace. The man making that remark is an empty-headed fool and unworthy of a place in this council. If another slur like that is attempted, while this gentleman is speaking, I will ascertain the culprit and have him whipped like a camp thief. Go

on, my man. Give us all your ideas in your own fashion. They seem of value."

"Well, Your Excellency, I am nearly through. These intrenchments I have assumed to be here, and we think they are, for we saw them making; these sir, may be but the bastions of better ones beyond. If so, we must look out for ourselves. You will find I think, that what looks like standing trees along the hill side as we advance will prove cut trees, artfully set up to shield rifle-pits. As I remember that ridge two years ago, it was practically bare. It now appears quite heavily brushed or wooded. Skirmishers sir, pioneers, riflemen dodging from tree to tree, the compact army following, must be our plan of procedure or we lose heavily. That in a body, we can dislodge them and drive them before us, I am certain, but we will lose hundreds, where by my plan, we will not lose tens. If you ascertain that they are not covering the creek valley well, it might be a good idea—in fact, I believe it would expedite matters greatly—to send a detachment of seven hundred or about that, up around the creek valley and fall upon them flank or rear, while we are engaging them in front and to the southwest. The feasibility of that sir, can be determined as the battle opens—perhaps before. That is all I have to say, sir."

"Thank you young man. You have scouted to some purpose. You are deserving of a better place than you now occupy, and if ever we reach home again, I shall see that you get it. While on this campaign, however, I want you where you are. You are worth to us, at least a score of these scoffers."

"I know the spalpane that slurred ye," whispered Murphy as we went out through the camp; "an' if ye want, I'll git Leftinant Batty to pick a quarrel wid 'im an' let daylight troo the divil."

"No, you won't do any such thing, Tim. He only did me a favor. In fact, I'm glad he slurred me."

"Ye may well be that," responded Tim chuckling.

As I look at it now, I thank God that Sullivan and not Gates commanded that expedition, for I do believe, that had Gates accepted, instead of refusing so insultingly as he did, he would never have listened to advice; would have been well to the rear himself that Sunday morning, if indeed the army had held together up to the date of this battle; would have had the lay of the land less well in head; and would have suffered defeat or terrible loss. Indeed, had we not been prepared for it, Brant's well-planned ambush must have cut us all to pieces. As it was, there was no hurry or confusion. Every man marched under orders emanating from Sullivan himself, who carried my map. Caution and coolness were Sullivan's chief characteristics,—something unusual in an Irishman—and not a detail escaped him. Leading all the advance was our rifle corps under Major Parr, and without any attempt at rank or file, we reconnoitered well every inch of the slope, along which we knew the enemy lay.

It was now nearly 10 o'clock. We were well up to the northwest end of the little ridge, when in a mass of freshly cut brush alongside the big ridge to the northeast, I saw a pair of naked copper-colored thighs. Murphy saw them about the same time that I did, and after we had progressed north a few



hundred yards, took careful aim and "cut loose" as the deer stalkers say. As he fired, every man of us sprang for cover and it was well we did so, for a volley that must have told fearfully, mowed the brush three feet above our heads. We returned the fire quickly, shooting just beneath their smoke; then as quickly, under cover of our own, advanced in a thin line fifty yards or more and lying flat, began reloading with all speed. As we lay we saw a great commotion in the brush out from which their fire had proceeded, and knew that the writhing wounded and dying lay thick. An instant later another volley, apparently directed at our former cover, cut brush and twigs there, but did us no harm. We fired again and this time scattered, taking to trees. As we did so, we saw several Senecas leap upward through the smoke and an instant later, a band of one hundred and fifty or more arose *en masse* and went scrambling out alongside the great hill, toward a dense growth of suspicious looking hemlock. They dashed in through this set up brush, knocking it down and exposing the logs of a breastwork here and there. We now knew we had unmasked their defenses. We lay there and at long range peppered them leisurely, Murphy and I vieing with one another in making a redskin show himself. But few did show themselves and not more than a dozen shots came from out that entire line. They still hoped we did not realize what awaited us; meanwhile we could look back down the valley and see our commanding officers in council.

Thus for nearly four hours we lay, wondering if the "old man ever would get ready to do something." At one time we saw a company of officers,

half a mile back, near the river. Finally I noted the absence of General Poor's brigade. They had vanished as completely as if the earth had swallowed them up, and calling Murphy's attention to this, he passed the word along that "General Pather had ordered General Poor to flank 'em an' bedad, he was behind the hill a doin' av it." Looking back to the point of the hill we now saw General Hand's command of which we under Parr were the skirmishers, forming in battle array, whereas they had all along been waiting in column. We also saw General Maxwell's brigade moving up the river, they having deployed from far to the rear and come up along the base of the hill, to a point, as I judged, about opposite General Poor on the other side of the ridge. A little later General Clinton's brigade disappeared around the point of the hill after Poor and in his support. General Hand's—our own—brigade now began to advance, and when within one hundred and fifty yards of us and about three hundred distant from the intrenchments, Proctor's battery of six three-pounders, two howitzers throwing five and one-half inch shells and a small brass Cohorn mounted on wooden legs, opened up and began playing on the side hill right over our heads.

"Wewew!" screamed the solid shot. "Tcha! Tcha! Titchity-itchity-itch-Boom!" went the shells as they followed more leisurely, struck and tore. "Whang!" went the wide mouthed little Cohorn, and at each report it could be seen bounding from its own smoke onto its back, where it lay like a grasshopper, legs in air. Blunderbuss though it might be, it was certainly a wicked little piece, for at each discharge its contents plastered the side hill with a

half peck of scrap that made splinters fly and bark hang in shreds.

And now, all the battle was opened. Our foes realized that concealment no longer availed them. From their works above us a thousand rifles shot forth intermittent flashes, and half as many muskets boomed like small cannon. The smoke marked well their line of defenses showing that they were very busy. Soon we heard firing atop the ridge, however, and knew that our time to move had come. With that lusty shout, so characteristic of Morgan's tall men, we scrambled up and began dodging from tree to tree, always toward the crest and firing as we could. A sally, led by Brant in person sought to check us, but the fire of the battery below, our own rifles spitting from behind every tree, bush and stump, the enfilading hail from Hand's musket men, drove them quickly back to cover. Walter Butler, with a bravery born of despair swung in behind with two hundred of his men and sought under cover of Brant's sally to surround us riflemen, but his command, which he drove and did not lead, refused to stay in that comparatively open spot. It broke, sought cover and within fifteen minutes had led the retreat up along the river and back of Newtown. Eight times did I take careful aim at Butler, but only once did I even in part succeed. That time he caught up the hat which I had knocked from his head and waved it as if in defiance.

Almost from the first, the Iroquois seemed in terror of the battery fire, the first they had ever faced. The solid shot they seemed to care less for than for the shells or the scrap from the Cohorn. That Cohorn was their especial dread and for a space of ten

seconds after it had kicked its heels derisively in the air, you could see Indians all along the line, burrowing like woodchucks when it was too late. Brant appeared to know no fear. His conduct was truly heroic that day. He seemed everywhere along that weakening, irresolute line and his peculiar long-drawn fierce yell was constantly kept up. One instant he would be seen running along before the line, waving his sword and urging his braves to follow. Again his hat plume would appear above the belching smoke as he stood behind the breastworks, directing the fire and urging every warrior to stand. At last, however, despite his best efforts, the line gave way. Our steady pressure was telling. We were flashing our guns in their faces. As the line swayed and seemed breaking he bounded to the weakest spot. It reformed. Then all along its length it seemed bracing as if for a sacrifice. Brant's voice and presence had accomplished wonders. Down the side hill nearer the trail where the fire was hottest, stood the Okwaga men like a stone wall. With the coolness and precision of seasoned white veterans they fired, reloaded and fired again and again. Little Aaron, Little Abraham, Antonio—several of the lesser chiefs were among them using rifles like the rest. The weakest portion of the line, was that made up of the fiercest "heart-eating" Senecas. They gave Brant far more trouble than did Dominie Kirkland's "praying Indians." They were less steadfast and seemed more inclined to shoot wild. Suddenly, three of them threw their guns and ran. A half dozen more followed. Brant, aided by Little Beard, closed up the line and for a period of ten seconds it stood. Then

under our steady pressure it gave way, retreated, formed again, retreated once more, then became panic stricken,—and the rout was complete. We chased them three miles, but they fled faster than we could pursue, leaving equipment and supplies strewn all along. Finally, they scattered like young partridges, some up one ravine, some up another and some over the hilltops. They had disappeared, but as the sound of the firing died away we could hear their long drawn “O-o-nah-h! O-o-nah-h! O-o-o-na-a-h-h!” growing fainter and fainter as they fled over the ridges.

That night we rested, buried our dead and cared for our wounded. We did not attempt to bury the fallen dead the foe had left. The task was too great. The next day and the day following, we destroyed the crops yet standing and moved westward. We met with little resistance, for Newtown had taught them we were invincible. Middletown was deserted, and at Kanawoholla we found only the graves of their recent dead.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### INCIDENTS WHICH RESULT IN MISFORTUNE

**A**T the first opportunity after the battle of Newtown, I sought out Dominie Kirkland and confided to him what I had as yet told only to Murphy. Knowing as Mr. Kirkland did, the veneration if not superstitious awe in which Tamalacqua had been held by all the allied tribes, he expressed surprise that Beacraft had not been immediately slain, and seemed confident that some Indian would yet kill him, whereat I was filled with anxiety. I wanted Beacraft for myself.

“Beacraft! Beacraft! where have I met that man?” mused the Dominie as he stood with bent head, striving to place him.

“‘Beacraft, Esq.,’ you know. Woolsey’s friend, sir.”

“Yes. I recollect about the affidavit, but where have I”—

“You are an older man than I, sir. Were you much about Johnson Hall eighteen or twenty years ago? Did you not know this man calling himself my uncle—Hans Diehl?”

“Why, yes. I knew Diehl—that is by reputation. He was looked on as a mysterious and disreputable character. No one knew where he came from. First appeared along about 1758. Came up from the south somewhere. Sir William told me,

I remember, that he was accompanied by a son or nephew, nearly grown when he came into the valley, but that the boy had committed some crime and fled. Let me see! When was it Sir William told me that? Oh! I know. It was before I left Dr. Wheelock's. There was talk of sending a teacher to Okwaga and I wanted the chance. Yes, I remember now. We were sitting in the Hall talking, when a little fellow came in on an errand of some kind and Sir William informed me the child was a nephew of this Diehl. Diehl had recently been guilty of some breach of the peace and after this child had gone, Sir William spoke of Diehl, told me something of the affair and declared his doubts as to the child being a relative of Hans's. Why that child might have been you!"

"It was, Mr. Kirkland. I remember the incident, now you have mentioned it. You were talking about religious belief and teaching when I entered and as I had a curiosity about those matters and did not know the sin of eavesdropping, I lingered outside the door, until a slave, thinking I was seeking a chance to pick fruit or pluck flowers, started me on. While I waited and listened, I heard Sir William tell you he did not believe I was any blood of Diehl's. I thought if Sir William said it, it must be so and ran home to ask Aunt Barbie. She grew greatly excited and told Uncle Hans, who seemed frightened and angry and wanted to beat me. I am not sure but he would have killed me. At any rate, I hid"—

"Yes. I remember the incident now, quite well. So you were that little lad, Quedar? I also remember Sir William told me at that time of an older son

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 267

or nephew, who had run away from old Hans. Now who was he?"

"That's just what I'm not quite sure of, Mr. Kirkland. Of course I have a supposition on that point, but you see I was only five or six years old at that time. Some things I can remember quite distinctly. That last incident of your visit and my going to the great man's house that day are very vivid. It seems to me now, I had only been in the valley a little time then. I can recollect but faintly before that incident—almost like a half forgotten dream it seems now—a great wide house, a sweet-faced little lady whom everybody seemed to give way to and whom I called auntie and was taken to see every evening. Aunt Barbie,—young, handsome and cheerful then, always took me. The little lady laid aside all her papers and big books, carefully put up the quills and ink horns beyond my reach, and I played all about the big room, while the two talked and watched me. Where that house was, I don't know, but it was not in the valley. It was unlike any house I ever saw there. It had wide verandas, long sloping roofs and windows that ran from floor to ceiling. As I have said, I used to go up there every night, and once I went riding with this auntie without Aunt Barbie. Then I remember the night we left this place. Aunt Barbie was crying and seemed fearful we should be heard or seen, although it was dark. As we went past the big veranda I saw the lady I called auntie writing at a table within. I wanted to go to her again and struggled, but a man came rushing up, put his hand over my mouth and carried me to a wagon near by, Aunt Barbie following and crying. She wept after



she took me in her arms, for I felt the tears splashing on my face. Then came the jolting of a wagon and I fell asleep, to awake the next morning in the woods. The wagon had gone. We entered a boat and it seems to me now as if we travelled for weeks. There were two men and one of them must have been Uncle Hans. I cannot remember his face, but he swore just as Uncle Hans used to—in Dutch. The other man was young,—but little more than a boy. He seemed very kind to Aunt Barbie. I cannot remember his face, except that it was long and thin, with a scraggly beard. He came once to Uncle Hans's house—a year after maybe, by night. There was a quarrel that awakened me from my sleep. I did not see him—only heard his voice; but I heard Uncle Hans order him from the house and he told him that if he ever darkened his door again, he would kill him. I remember I wondered how he could darken a door in the night. That was the first time I had ever heard that expression. After that, I lived as before, with Uncle Hans and Aunt Barbie. She seemed to grow old very fast. She died when I was but twelve or thirteen years of age. One thing about all this, I must explain to you. My dim recollections, those about the big wide house, my travels, that quarrel by night,—all those left me, or rather I never remember having them until recently. Now isn't that strange? You would think that I must have had even better recollections of those matters while I was from ten to twelve years of age, yet strange to say I did not. They came to me recently—gradually too. Just a little at a time. For that reason I sometimes think that all this may be my imagination. I wish I knew the truth."

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 269

"Yes, Quedar, and we must know it. Could this Beacraft have been that young companion of Diehl's, do you think?"

"He might have been. It was Beacraft who killed Hans Diehl I am quite sure, although I cannot prove it."

"How came Tamalagua to know all about this, Quedar?"

"I'm sure I can't say, sir. That's the mystery. I fancy I can see a connection between Beacraft and Hans Diehl, but as to Beacraft and Tamalagua,—well, I'm puzzled. However, if I can catch this Beacraft and get him alone in the woods somewhere, I can make him tell."

"What do you mean, Quedar? Would you torture him?"

"Give me the chance and see."

"I don't know that any one can blame you, Quedar, but nevertheless, this seems terrible. To think of one man tying up another and torturing him."

"Yes, Mr. Kirkland, and to think of one man stealing a little child from its parents and Christian surroundings and putting it in a place where it will be ruined, body and soul. Think of the beatings I have endured; the curses I have heard;—all that I suffered as a child. Think of what my poor mother (this woman I remember as auntie), must have suffered and may be suffering to-day. Does not such a crime merit severe punishment? Does not the man who knows the secret that means so much to so many, deserve torture sufficient to make him tell?"

"I really believe he does, Quedar. God forgive me, but I do."

For days after this interview, I longed to go out and scout within the enemy's lines, but the instructions given all scouts were peremptory; "Take no unnecessary risks. Do not go more than four or five miles beyond the army's advance brigade." I was one of the detail that was sent north to the lake country to destroy Catherine's Town and other villages of that region. The destruction of villages was such a common event, that we thought little of it.

On the evening of September 12th, the major portion of the army had reached the lowlands off southeast of abandoned Chenussio, more commonly known as the Genesee Flats in later years, and from there we bore off to the east side of Conesus lake. Murphy and I came in from a scout just before nightfall and immediately learned that the maps in possession of our leaders, gave the old location of Little Beard's town. I knew that it had been moved to the west bank of the Genesee river, and had so informed Murphy six months before. When he came to me this evening and informed me that the army was on the wrong scent and off its proper course some three or four miles, I at once repaired to headquarters and told what I knew. Boyd, who knew little of the country, but wished to make it appear that he knew all, disputed me in the presence of all the officers, and insinuated that I was striving to save the famous Genesee Castle, whereat I grew surly. I finally informed them, that if they chose to go wrong, I could stand it if they could. I do not know to this day, where Boyd got his information, but he stuck to his assertion stoutly, and finally offered to go ahead and locate the town. I knew

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 271

the country like a book and realizing that he was going into great danger, swallowed my resentment and offered to go with him. He seemed to entertain little if any spite against me. In fact, from his friendliness, one would not have supposed he had but just accused me of an action almost traitorous. I knew Boyd's erratic disposition, and believed it my duty to go with him and keep him out of danger. I advised that he take Murphy, David Ehleron, Weston, Rush and me only, but he would not listen to me on this score for an instant. He seemed bound to make the expedition something heroic, and called for volunteers. This was expressly contrary to General Sullivan's orders. At least the general had advised him not to take more than six men, and I have been since told, that he named the men I had suggested to Boyd. However, be that as it may, Boyd sent out his call on his own responsibility.

In a few minutes he had nearly thirty volunteers, including Murphy and me and Hon Yerry, who with Skenando had just come in from the upper lake country. Old Skenando wished to go too, but Boyd objecting because of his age, a companion of theirs, a Stockbridge Indian known as Captain Jehoiakim, was accepted in his stead. It was a very dark night, and when we set out between eleven and twelve o'clock, I felt far from easy. Boyd was for marching up the trail, two men abreast and issued his commands in a voice that might have been heard a long distance in that solemn stillness, but Murphy and I finally persuaded him to let us put Hon Yerry and Jehoiakim ahead, we following in no regular order, but as judgment dictated, and very quietly. At the outset he and some few of his men used little

caution, claiming there were no Indians or Tories within ten miles, but we knew better, and were so earnest in our protest that the entire force sided with us and overruled him. When we finally came to where the trail branched off to the west, I stopped him, struck a light and let him see for himself that the trail was not much travelled and that he was mistaken in his assertions back at the camp. Then I offered to lead him to the old site, but this offer he declined.

He now demanded that I lead him to the new town, two miles farther north. I pointed out that the nearest way to the new town from the foot of the lake, was to go by the old town, passing Gathsegwarohare and Chenussio. Either he could not or would not understand and so I led him the way I chose,—by the former town and on to abandoned Chenussio. We hardly halted at either town, but hastened on north to the ford across the Genesee, opposite the new town of Chenandoanes. The absence of fires or other sign of life, convinced me that this town too was abandoned, but I insisted that he let Murphy, the two Oneidas and me reconnoiter, which he finally did. From what we could see, it seemed as if the enemy had abandoned the town but a few hours before—probably, the evening of the 12th. Their fires were yet smouldering. We were over an hour executing this delicate commission, and returned to find him very impatient. It was now not two hours to daylight, and I recommended that we get back to the army, but he would not hear of such a thing. He finally overruled me, and two hours of that precious darkness was consumed in again crossing the river and prowling about that

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 273

deserted town. Not even an Indian dog disputed our possession, and just at the flush of dawn, when we should have been entering our own lines, we set out for that eight miles of return, through a country in which I knew a thousand foes might lie in ambush.

As we started, we saw through the mists to the north, four horsemen. Boyd now gave orders for concealment, and later sent eight of our force to capture or kill the new comers. They were Senecas and while one was killed and another wounded, the three escaped across the country to the west of the trail we had come. I now urged haste in returning, and at last realizing our danger, he agreed with me, still insisting, however, that there were no foes between us and our army. Still, he was wise enough to send out the two Indians in advance; and, keeping well together, the rest of us hurried after. We travelled in this way four or five miles and then halted for a rest and a bite to eat, sending four men through the woods in a direct line to the army to report; also posting two out a half mile beyond, at the bend of the trail, to there watch, while we ate. These had hardly reached their destination, when Boyd changed his mind, declared he was not afraid and ordered a third to go after the two and tell them to go to camp and report our whereabouts. He further sent word that we would await the arrival of the army there. He then gave orders for us to cook breakfast and with much misgiving, we began to prepare it.

Not five minutes from that time Hon Yerry came running back, saying he had seen five Indians skulking along the trail, examining the footprints of the

four messengers that had gone along. It was plain to me that we were being quietly surrounded, and I advised that we get onto a knoll some distance nearer the Canaseraga, cut some brush and logs there and throw up some slight fortifications; but Boyd ordered a march instead. We went east about two miles, when we saw the five Indians our men had reported. They seemed awaiting our approach. These were Senecas, as were all others we had seen, and as we came towards them, to the distance of a long rifle shot, they retreated.

“Chase them!” shouted Boyd. “Give them a volley for luck!” The eight regulars did this, but the fourteen riflemen and Indians to a man, sought shelter behind tree trunks. “Come on, you cowardly curs!” shouted Boyd in a fury and spurred by his harsh words we followed the regulars, who were now some distance ahead, pushing sharply after the retreating Senecas. “Look out for an ambush!” shouted one of our men, but Boyd, with a red angry face, ran back, threatened us with his sword and ordered us ahead.

“This be a dom fool caper!” declared Murphy in a low voice as we hurried along. We had chased them in this way for a quarter of a mile or less and were running fast down a slope, when suddenly from behind knolls and trees we had already passed, fifty or sixty Indians ran in behind, and before we could check our down-hill charge, had cut us off. We looked back over the way we had come, and there, to the southwest, dodging from tree to tree and all the time drawing nearer, were the rangers of Walter Butler. We turned from them to look ahead, and saw the woods literally swarming with

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 275

rangers and Indians. Every tree and bush had seemingly given shelter. Our situation was most desperate. Boyd's bull-headed bravery had led us into a trap that no backwoodsman should ever have stuck his head into. Twenty-four men surrounded by at least five hundred foes, thirsting for their blood, and others coming.

Boyd's nerve did not forsake him however. He was a brave man, and a capable leader in any but an occasion like this. "My brave lads, follow me!" he shouted, and dashed toward the thinnest portion of the closing circle, toward the flat below.

"Not a man of yeez!" roared Murphy and every man, even Sergeant Parker, Boyd's second in command, stopped.

"What means this?" demanded Boyd running back to Murphy.

"I mane that I'm commandher now," yelled the little Irishman as he whirled and started to run in an opposite direction. "Ivery mother's son o' ye folly me to higher ground. Kape off that flat. There's not a tree for shelther there—nothin' but scatherin' brush. There's the very place the divils 'ud drive us."

We all, including Boyd, followed Murphy some eighty yards to a thick clump of large-bolled scrubby beeches, standing thickly on a round knoll or ridge, between two wide ravines or swales. The enemy must come across an open of at least one hundred yards on three sides to get at us. I prayed God that it might prove wider as I ran. However, it did not. It was a good rifle shot across and the slope of the rise gave the enemy poor cover from our shots. Sheltered by these trees, we stood a



chance of keeping them off for a time unless they were desperate enough to charge across the open, in which case we could get twice as many lives as we lost. Each of us sought a tree trunk as we gained the knoll, and the last fight of many of us began.

On came the enemy, slowly closing in. Their fierce, menacing yells seemed now to come from all sides. We fired, reloaded, and fired again as fast as we could. Their loss must have been severe, for they fell on all sides of us, yet on they came, still yelling exultantly. We were as yet practically unharmed, when the bullets began singing across the knoll and a man at the tree next mine grunted, doubled up and fell. A ball had broken his spine. I looked beyond him and saw three others writhing on the ground. The enemy saw that we were determined not to surrender, and would fight to the last. They preferred captives for torture, but if we would not surrender, they could shoot us down. On all sides now came quick puffs of smoke and the spiteful "ping" of bullets was all about our ears. We were shooting fast, and with deadly accuracy, but under such an attack could not hope to hold out long. Our main army we had momentarily seen as we foolishly followed Boyd over the high ridge up back the way we had come. It was then near Kanoghsaws, only a little more than a mile distant, but there seemed scant hope of its realizing our position, so far from its natural course. We had been led like lambs to the slaughter.

Both Boyd and Parker seemed to expose themselves unnecessarily, as I thought, and I wondered why they were not hit, until I heard the voice of Walter Butler from out the woods across the swale:

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 277

“Let no man shoot the officers nor the big fellow with long black hair! We want them alive!” Brant’s voice from the farther diameter of the circle repeated this order, and I heard it taken up and repeated again and again by the Seneca and Cayuga chiefs. Momentarily, the shooting and yelling had ceased, but now both were resumed again. That order maddened me for I understood its meaning. Brant was as bad as Butler. The latter was keeping from sight. I would kill the chief if I could. I tried again and again, but failed. The firing became incessant now and there was one constant din on all sides save one—the wider swale to the east seemed open. It was too dangerous for our assailants and they were keeping out of it.

Murphy now left his tree and came crawling along the ground to the centre of our little circle, where he stopped and while lying on his back loading his gun called out: “Byes! We kin never bate ’em off. They’re too many. We’re on’y sixteen all towld this very minute an’ growin’ beootifly less. There goes Con Gilchrist now. Fifteen, I shu’d a said. It’s dith or captivity an’ captivity manes blisters the hull lingth o’ ye. Who’ll folly me troo the swale there? The grass is high an’ the mud dape, but begorra it’s the on’y show.”

“Go ahead, Tim!” came from all sides, and all prepared for the rush.

“Scatther, Byes! Scatther!” was Tim’s parting admonition, as without further ceremony he bounded down the slight slope and into the swamp. As he went a band of Onondagas, crawling like snakes through the grass to get a better and closer shot at us, perhaps to rush us, arose before him, but

scattered as quickly. Our movement in this direction was entirely unsuspected, and all but Boyd, Parker and I broke through. Parker was hurt, and Boyd and I were helping him along. Without Parker, Boyd and I might possibly have escaped, desperate as seemed the chances, for Murphy and six or seven others reached the woods, but Parker could not run. I ordered Boyd to help him, and turned to beat back our pursuers with my clubbed rifle, when I was upset by a wiry young buck who clasped my knees, and the whole band piled atop of me. Half suffocated by the mud, I arose twice with them, and know that I killed two or three by breaking their necks or heads with blows of my fists, but they swarmed about me, tripped me and finally dragged me down. Boyd fought well, coming to bay astride the prostrate body of Parker, where he made a very pretty sword play, but a blow from behind with a club felled him, and before he could recover he was bound.

Bruised and battered as we were, and covered thick with that slime of the swamp, we must have presented a pitiful sight when taken before Butler and Brant over back of the Canaseraga. We went over the rise of ground that Murphy and his followers had made, and as we did so, came upon the body of poor Hon Yerry, terribly mutilated. He had died fighting and no less than six Senecas lay dead about him.

“Oh, but it’s a long lane that has no turning,” sneered Butler as he looked at my battered features, tumbled hair and torn attire. Then he laughed and stepped nearer, slapped me first on one side of the head, then on the other. Brant crowded be-

## Incidents Which Result in Misfortune 279

tween us. "Stand back there, you copper-colored hypocrite," snarled Butler. "These are my prisoners."

"You're drunken liar. My warriors ketch 'em. Captain Brant in command here. Your fadder no put you in command." This assertion seemed true, for at a word from him we were hurried up the trail and through the abandoned towns we had so lately quitted.

## CHAPTER XXX

### BY A HAIR'S BREADTH

**A**S we were driven along down the old Genesee trail, I looked back and realized that the sacrifice of our little band had prevented a more serious ambush than that at Newtown, for the enemy had been hidden at the head of a ravine, just northeast of the Canaseraga, down which our unsuspecting army must have passed and been frightfully punished if not scattered. We had brought on an engagement by firing at the five Indians. Both Brant and Butler now admitted that they stood no chance of surprising Sullivan and ordered a retreat down the Canaseraga and Genesee. About two o'clock a halt was made out opposite Chenandoane ford and there Brant saw to it, that we were properly fed. I was so sore that I could hardly move, and having been out the night before, was nearly dead from fatigue. Boyd was in a worse condition, and poor Parker was entirely unable to keep up. By Brant's orders, Parker was bound on a horse, and either asleep or insensible, rode with closed eyes, all that afternoon. Just before nightfall of the 14th, we forded to the west bank of the river, where there was an old cattle stockade. Here a halt was ordered, and on the great plain eight miles north of

Little Beard's new town of Chenandoanes, a consultation was had.

It started in as a council, but feeling ran high between the rangers and Indians, and within an hour a grand row was in progress. Butler thought the prisoners his, or claimed them at best. Brant flatly refused. Little Beard, the fierce leader of the Senecas, stood by Brant for a time, but finally, as Brant afterward told me, Butler took Little Beard aside and told him that Brant wanted the captives, that he might save their lives, while he (Butler) wanted them that he might see Little Beard torture them. Then Little Beard sided with Butler, and Brant was compelled to compromise.

During this pow wow I had been asleep, but poor Boyd could not rest. He seemed to have a presentiment of some terrible evil—something more horrible than had yet happened. About ten o'clock he awakened me. I sat up considerably refreshed. Parker was asleep, but was moaning with pain in a way that was pitiful. We could hear the voices of the contestants, just outside the log cattle house in which we were confined. Our guard, squatted before the door, was listening to the altercation beyond. Still further beyond, a band of Seneca squaws that had appeared from down north, were mourning their dead. I crawled to a chink in the logs, and there looked and listened. It was very dark, and quite cold. Little Beard, who had secured some liquor from Butler's supply and was half drunk, was making a rambling speech, justifying his change of mind. The dignity of an Iroquois council was certainly not there. Brant sprang to his feet, even while Little Beard was speaking,

and gave him the lie. Then there was a tumult. Knives and hatchets were drawn and bloodshed seemed imminent. Brant, however, cowed them all. He sprang within the circle and strode over to Little Beard, who retreated before him. He drove them from the circle, and then turned his attention to Butler. He challenged him to produce his orders from Col. Butler, his father, and claimed that they were to the effect that the captives should be delivered safely at Niagara, whither the Colonel had gone.

Butler admitted this charge. He claimed, however, that the losses of his friends, the Senecas had been so great, that he was justified in breaking his orders, and meant to break them. Then there was a war of words, so confused, that I understood but little of it. It embraced other subjects than the captives, however. Brant during this debate offered to let Butler have the two officers, the Indians to retain me. This was agreed upon. Then Butler seemed advocating another ambush of our army. The Indians had had enough fighting, however. Brant saw his advantage and now branded Butler as a coward, who sent his men ahead of himself, and the Indians ahead of his men. This was a home thrust, for all had seen his action in the recent battle. Brant rung all the changes on this one strong point against Butler, and soon had things his own way. I could see that even the rangers, Butler's own followers, were in sympathy with Brant. Butler seeing that he was beaten, finally fell back on Brant's offer, but tacked on a proviso which made my hair raise: the white Oneida, Quedar, was to be immediately turned over for torture. Brant accepted this condition without a protest,—he could

do little else—and my heart stopped its beating for an instant as I heard the howls of the demons whom this decision had so pleased.

The rangers now withdrew up the plain some distance, and I conjectured that they intended retreating westward to Niagara, leaving the Indians to shift for themselves. Brant and Butler came into our prison together, and seemed friendly enough toward one another, although I suspected either would have delighted in cutting out the heart of the other. An Indian following them brought a lighted torch, which he stuck up between the logs. Butler walked over to Parker and kicked him heavily in the ribs. With a cry of pain Parker rolled over and attempted to sit up; but he was too weak, and fell back and lay there moaning.

“A pretty subject for a barbecue! He won't live to get to Niagara. Better burn him to-night, while he's got life enough to kick and yell,” remarked the fiend as he turned his attention to Boyd. He kicked at him, but Boyd catching his foot, brought him heavily to the earth floor, whereat Brant smiled as if pleased. Butler sprang to his feet, his evil face flaming with passion, and half drew his sword as if to run the captive through, but as Boyd arose, folded his arms and stood looking him in the eye, changed his mind and struck him a heavy blow with his clenched fist between the eyes. As Boyd went down like a bullock, beneath this cowardly blow, I lost control of myself and sprang upon Butler.

With what fierce joy I drove my fingers in behind his windpipe and heard him make that peculiar gagging sound as his wet tongue came out over my hand. Brant stood quietly by and let me choke and



shake him. I felt him quiver and knew he would be dead within a minute or two, but that was not enough. I felt that I must dash him to the ground, smash his head, mutilate him, crush all semblance of humanity out of his vile carcass. I swung him above my head and was about to bring him down, when, with a low word of command to the guard, Brant sprang upon me. The three, coupled with the weight of my victim, bore me to the ground, where they tried to break my grip upon Butler's throat. They tugged but in vain. I noted with joy that his face was now black, and that his eyes, protruding so horribly from their sockets, looked more like balls of clotted blood than eyes. Fifteen seconds more and his wicked spirit would be winging its way to its reward. I laughed at their futile efforts and hung on, when a tap from a war club in the hands of one of the guard, a blow I saw Brant signal for, knocked the strength and wits all out of me. When I came to myself, Butler was lying on the floor over underneath the torch, and the guard was working to resuscitate him, while Brant stood looking on. Dazed and half crazed as I was, my first impulse was to get at Butler again and I crawled in that direction. Brant, turning, saw me, and bending down caught me by the shoulder.

"Be quiet, Quedar!" he whispered. "You no be quiet, Captain Brant no be able to save you. You kill Butler, they feed you to dogs. Trust Thayendanega." Boyd, too, shook his aching head at me, and I lay down again. The guard then carried Butler out. He was gasping and choking as he went, and must have had a fear of me thereafter, for he did not come in again while I was confined there.

Two hours later, he sent five ruffianly looking rangers, Beacraft among them, after Boyd and Parker.

Poor Boyd was greatly affected in parting from me. He supposed he was going to captivity among white men, and I to torture among Indians, but something told me that I should live longer than he. Parker was weak and delirious and babbled incoherently when I bade him good-bye. Then I turned to Boyd again.

"It is hard, Quedar," he said brokenly, tears of sympathy streaming from his bruised and blackened eyes. "Very hard to leave so noble a fellow as you to the mercies of savages. You have been the best friend I ever had, and I shall always remember you. I hope something will turn up that will save you, but I am fearful. Good-bye, Quedar! Good-bye! May God bless and keep you."

I said nothing more than good-bye, although it was on my tongue's tip to tell him I preferred taking *my* chances with red savages, to *his* with that white fiend he was in the power of. A merciful God spared us the knowledge at that sad parting of poor Boyd's awful end. I need not detail that tragedy here. Every reader of history knows how Butler took those two men in hand as soon as he had them in his own camp, questioned them fruitlessly as to Sullivan's plan of campaign, whipped them, reviled them, and finally turned them over to Little Beard, who, taking them back to his own town the next day, tortured them to death in most unspeakable ways.

No sooner had Boyd and Parker been taken away that night, than Brant came in, followed by six or eight of his guard. "So you're going to roast me,

Captain?" said I. I felt that I must assume a brave front, even if I did not feel it. To be sure I had been cheered somewhat by his whispered words, but I was not yet certain that I was to escape, or if so, how.

"Quedar run gantlet first. Then roast mebbe."

"You'll have to build a high fire Captain, to roast me. I'll tell you what I'd rather you'd do: go outside and hunt up Beacraft—he's with your crowd isn't he? Bring him and Walter Butler and that hulking brute McDonald. Turn 'em all loose in this room here with me barehanded and if I don't plaster these logs with parts of 'em—if I don't kill every last one of 'em, do with me what you will."

The Chief shook his head, but his eyes glittered, and I fancied that he would have enjoyed the contest. An old Mohawk, one of his guard and a privileged character, here spoke up. "Quedar talk heap big. Him make heap big fight too. Me like see it."

"You can bet your blanket, Little Aaron," I returned. I knew the old fellow, having met him many times at Okwaga, where he was head man of the Mohawks. He made no further comment, but a little later, the remainder of the guard went outside, he and Brant retiring to a farther corner of the cabin, where they talked some time in a low voice. Soon Brant arose and went out and Little Aaron coming over squatted down beside me. He looked at me keenly, said nothing, then arose again and replenished my small fire. He was a peculiar old fellow; being of few words, even for an Indian. He never smoked except at council fires, but he chewed, —aye, literally ate tobacco.

"Quedar hold tongue?" he finally inquired.

"I think I can, Little Aaron. Try me and see."

"Quedar keep secret, no matter how much torture?"

I felt encouraged and ready to promise anything, yet could I? I meditated a little. It was death anyhow. I would keep it. "Yes, Little Aaron, if you'll promise me to get around and hatchet me before the thing has lasted too long, I'll keep mum."

Little Aaron bowed gravely, and I knew that he would keep his word. "Quedar give two word?" He held up two fingers.

"Yes, I may as well make two promises as one; it will be all the same in the end."

His head approached mine, and his tobacco laden breath almost choked me as he whispered, his long nose within an inch of mine: "Captain Brant, him glad Quedar choke White Skunk. All Mohawks glad. Quedar brave lad. Senekees all thirsty. Want drink blood White Oneida. Little Beard want eat heart."

"Speak Mohawk. I speak him," I interrupted, eager to hasten what was coming, and loath to wait his halting English. For some reason he would not change to Mohawk, but spoke more rapidly and also more smoothly.

"To-morrow's sun, Quedar be led out and tied to torture tree for hatchet test. Captain Brant, Little Aaron, all Mohawks throw tomahawk. Mebbe knife, too. All taunt White Oneida. Call him skunk, woodchuck, rabbit, toad. Captain Brant worst all. No kill White Oneida. Cut him little mebbe. No kill. Then long gantlet troo ole stockade. Senekee squaws heap long gads—dog clubs, too, mebbe. All lick. Lick all same hell. Furder

end gantlet mebbe ten Mohawk"—here he held up both hands—"all clubs, knives, prisoner strings. Mohawks jump. Strike at Quedar—no hit 'im. Fool Senekees. Quedar jump high like young buck. Strike. Yell all same debbil. Mohawks 'fraid. Let go. Quedar find two shootgun, sack corn, under roots Old 'Moke's oak, head Old 'Moke's glen."

I knew the place well. It was a large tree at the head of a gloomy ravine, some two miles north of Little Beard's town of Chenussio. Under this tree, Grahta or Old Smoke, the last and most historic high priest of the Seneca Sun superstition, sat nearly all the summer through, awaiting the tributes of food which his younger tribesmen brought him.

"Yes. I understand. I can make that all right, ahead of any buck in this crowd if I get a good start."

"Mohawks fix dat. Mohawks do all eef—white man's eef in way." Here the old fellow stopped and sat eyeing me.

"If what?" I asked, wondering what was coming next.

"Quedar say he go 'way. Up 'long little lake over 'cross to Mohawk Den back Schoharie."

"What! You want me to desert the army?"

"Yeeah. Quedar no lead Town 'Stroyer Mohawk country den."

"Oh! I see! You must think I'm quite a fellow. You think I'm hired to do that, do you?" Then I communed with myself. "Well! It's a short cut home anyway, and I know Sullivan don't meditate any such move as that. I'm a dead man if I don't agree to it. I've never enlisted regularly anyway."

Then I made answer aloud. "Yes, Little Aaron, I'll do it."

"Ugh! Good!" was all he said as he arose and went outside. He had not been long gone, when a younger Mohawk came in with a lotion of the blossom of the arnica or Indian tobacco plant. With this he bathed not only my bruised head, but my entire body. Soothed by the treatment and once more full of hope, I drew on my clothing and composed myself for sleep.

The next morning when I awoke it was cloudy and the cold north wind was sweeping up the Genesee from the big lakes. I looked out through my chink, and saw that every preparation had been made for a grand entertainment of which I was to be the chief attraction. A goodly portion of meat, fish, and Indian potatoes was sent in, and of this I ate all that I could crowd down, for I knew not when I might get another meal. Little Aaron came in as I was finishing, and offered me a swig of rum. Out of courtesy, I pretended to drink heartily, but the stuff ran down the outside rather than the inside of my neck, and it being dark in the cabin, this was not noticed. I do not believe in rum anyhow and at this time I needed all my wits. I was now ordered to strip to the waist. Foreseeing this event, I had secreted the buckskin amulet containing Edith's picture, which I generally wore about my neck, in the belt of my buckskin breeches. I noted with no little surprise, that some kind hand had removed my old worn footwear during the night, and put in its place a pair of heavy high laced moccasins together with a quantity of fawn skin for wrapping

my feet. I put these on with great care, and announced my readiness.

My hands were now bound behind my back, and I was led out by a guard of about twenty Mohawks, many of whom I had known before the war, while on all sides were the hundreds of Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas and Tuscaroras I had known, traded with and lived among, while they were peaceful farmers. Now what a change. They were furious devils. Taunts of every conceivable name and nature came at me from every throat. The squaws, especially the older ones, were particularly venomous. One old Seneca crone, whom I had refused to trade with on my last trip through, because of her tricky ways, ran screaming along beside me, a veritable fury, a huge dog club in one hand, a knife and forked stick in the other. She informed me that she meant to knock me down, carve a choice bit from my breast, and roast and eat it.

“Drop that club and get a gad, you she wood-chuck, or you won’t be allowed a crack at me in the gantlet,” I called out to her in Seneca. Then I laughed as derisively as I could, and the squaw mob went wild. There seemed dogs and squaws in plenty, although where they had come from, I did not know. I noted that the old stockade, extending off south, had been newly wattled and repaired. This formed an enclosed gantlet course, such as is sometimes erected when the victim, as in my case, is large and strong. I was now led to the torture tree, out opposite the cabin at the head of this course, a thrifty young oak having been limbed and peeled and horribly decorated for the occasion. I noted that the Mohawks seemed giving this enter-

tainment, with Brant as master of ceremonies. Only his trusted guard handled me.

As my wrists were tied to the stake, Brant stepped before me, and backing off began taunts which, if less vulgar, were certainly keener than any I had yet heard. This taunting speech he kept up for a full minute, and then taking from an attendant a bow and a bunch of arrows, he began shooting straight at my face. I pray God I may never have another such experience as that. My confidence in him and my strength of will enabled me to look him defiantly in the eye, even to make faces and laugh at him, but it did seem as if I could not hold my head still as the arrows came. "Tzst—tu-u-n-g!" buzzed the first, and quivered in the wood not an inch from my left ear, its shaft standing out well across my face. Then came its fellow over the other ear, its shaft touching the first. Then one at my crown and others following fast, until seven had encircled my head. He now threw his hatchet, and that too stuck between the arrows, its handle against my temple. A young warrior recovered it for him and he drove it again in the other side. Withdrawing it, he now gave place to others noted among the various tribes for their skill at such practice. Some threw knives, which were left quivering in the wood, but all hatchets were withdrawn.

I had thus far withstood this test in a manner that surprised myself, and was fast gaining confidence, when an incident I had begun to hope would not occur, took place. Bounding Buck, a young and intensely excitable Onondaga, threw a large knife, which coming at my forehead, struck high, glanced off and went rattling among the fagots gathered



for the burning, while the blood flew out over my face and breast. There was now a general tumult, and derisive epithets were hurled at him from all sides, while the squaws cast mud and gravel at him. He retired in great apparent discomfiture. Brant seemed considerably disturbed by this incident. "He dam fool Injun," he muttered, as he drew a bundle of fagots to my feet, that he might be high enough to examine my wound. It was bleeding freely and looked ghastly enough although in reality but a scratch. He reached behind him and Little Aaron, obedient to his request, handed him a huge quid of tobacco. This he crowded into the open cut. The smart was intense. "Look out for yourself! I'm going to kick," I whispered, and with that I sent him sprawling. He played his part well, scrambling to his feet in apparent fury; and dancing about me with a drawn knife, made as if to slice my ears. I kicked out vigorously, and a half dozen of his warriors threw themselves about my legs and crowded about me. As they did so, Brant made as if to slice off my right ear, but missed and fell against me, at the same time whispering: "Fight hard! Cut cords bymeby!" I kept struggling and wagging my head. Little Beard, half-crazed with drink, now came rushing up, flourishing his knife, and calling for one ear. Walter Butler, too drunk to walk straight, early as was the hour, called to them all to stand back while he sliced off my nose with his sword. At this instant, I felt the cords at my wrists loosen and a young buck whispered in my ear: "Run troo gantlet! Jump rope 'tudder end!"

The second I was free, I threw my tormentors from me as I might have done so much straw,

Butler in jumping backward caught his heel and sprawled on the ground, his sword flying yet farther back. As I caught it up Little Beard made a vicious knife thrust at me, and ripped my right arm well up on the shoulder. He also attempted to follow me, but the first sweep of the sword caught him through his prominent nose. Had he been six inches nearer me, his head must have been sliced clean off. As it was, the point of the weapon cut through gristle and bone, across both cheeks just below the eyes. I did not linger, but darted like an arrow down the gantlet enclosure, waving the keen blade about my head. The long row of squaws had left their positions on either side of the path prepared for me, and crowding forward to see the fun, were now huddled about the entrance. With the most blood-curdling yells I could utter, I bore down at them, and they scattered like chaff. One tall, agile young squaw (Little Abraham's Lucy), swung in behind me, and for a hundred yards struck me about the waist at every jump—the lithe water beech gad fetching blood at each stroke. She was a phenomenal runner, but she had no such incentive as those stinging strokes on my bare flesh gave me, and I soon distanced her.

And now at the end of the gantlet enclosure huddled the Mohawk guard. Could I place reliance on Thayendanega's word? Would they let me go through? The fence on either side was high, but had not I better get over it? No! I would not. Brant had been true to me thus far, and I would follow the program. My heart sank as I saw the crowd before me. Twenty-five if one, and all howling like wolves. No weapons were flourished, but

a rope of twisted willow bark was stretched from one stockade to the other, and moved up and down as if to trip me. I ran as if intending to jump it, but stopping suddenly, cleft it with a blow of the sword. Then swinging my weapon as before, I cleared a path, and the open fields and woods were before me. I looked off over my right shoulder to the northwest and caught a glimpse of Beacraft and McDonald astride of horses and riding hard. They had rushed to horse at the torture tree, and rode down outside the stockade to see the fun when I was stopped, but the swiftness and the quickness with which I had broken through had surprised them. I was three hundred yards ahead of them, whereas they had expected to meet me. I did not believe they were gaining on me, for I was running faster than I ever had before. Time and again had I made two hundred yards and the return quicker than any pony in the Oneida camp, and now that my life was at stake, I could surely do better.

The wind was fairly whistling past my ears, and my long black hair stood out straight behind as I bounded down the first slope to the river's brink, and then ran south along the gravel. I was making for a slight bluff ahead, from which I hoped to take a header that should take me well out into the middle of the river, come up for a mouthful of air and dive again. My closest pursuer was Pocky Seth, a slim young Mohawk from the upper castle. Built like a greyhound and comparatively fresh, for I had run seven hundred yards, he kept well with me. Soon he began to gain and I was thinking of turning on him when between his clenched teeth I heard: "Canoe fifty yards ahead."

There it lay, half drawn up on the upper side of a little bar. Catching it up as I ran into the water, I threw myself into it and shot out into the open river just as Seth, catching his toe by accident or design, fell sprawling. The young Mohawks coming after fell over him, and for a space of fifteen seconds, there was such horse play as must have betrayed the deceit, had not the willows hidden Brant's young men from the horsemen on the plain above. Catching up the paddle, I bent to with a will, and had taken a dozen quick strokes, when glancing back I saw Beacraft aiming a rifle at me from the bluff above the willows. Without waiting to catch up my sword, I lunged over the side of the canoe and was so deep in the water that I did not hear the rifle crack. Indeed, I should not have known of its discharge had I not seen the smoking gun in the villain's hands as I came up and noted a jagged hole in the canoe's side as it danced lightly along down stream. Alternately rising and diving like a wounded duck, and swimming under water as much as I could, I finally made shallow water and the eastern shore, McDonald putting two pistol balls in the mud near my head as I crawled up the bank. Beacraft was reloading as rapidly as he could, but before he could shoot again I was speeding away across the plains, making for the low ridge that runs north and south, clear to Chenussio.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### BEACRAFT AT LAST

**I**F ever a man was tempted to break his promise it was I, when having crossed the trail and gained the shelter of the woods on the higher ground, I paused to regain my breath, and to cleanse my person of the blood of my wounds, and the filth which the squaws had flung at me. It was plain that I had no pursuers on this side of the river, for none had crossed, nor were any in sight. To the south, not fifteen miles away, was our army, where awaited me clothing, food and companionship. Schoharie was at least two hundred miles east, and I must make a detour to reach it that would lengthen my journey at least another twenty-five miles. I had as yet no food, and was half naked. I was also in an enemy's country, and a thousand dangers lay before me. I sat pondering for some little time. I had no fear of any one trailing me, for Little Beard's clan were disorganized, Cornplanter was out at Niagara, and Brant could easily form an excuse for calling his warriors off. I was becoming chilled, when "boom!" came the sound of a heavy gun rolling down the valley. The occasion for this firing at nine o'clock in the morning, I supposed to have been the signal for the army's march. At all events, it renewed my temptation to seek my friends there,

but I put it down, crawled out of the thicket which I had taken refuge in, and looked back down and across the river.

A wooded ridge running well out toward the river farther north, prevented my seeing the camp which I had quitted but an hour before. South of this ridge, and on both sides of the river, was a wide open intervale, the grazing and cornground of the Senecas. Over across the river, to the west, I could discern a large body of Indians. They had but just come in view out from behind the woods, and were moving rapidly south. Ahead of them some four miles, were two horsemen also bound south, but so great was the distance that I could not tell whether they were Indians or white men. I conjectured, however, that they were Beacraft and McDonald, who hoped to cut me off from the army. Neither could I tell at the time to what tribe the Indians belonged, but I now know that they were Little Beard and his Seneca wolves going back up to Chenandoanes to remove some property, and to torture and murder Boyd and Parker. Oh, that our army could have come upon them while at their bloody work. I had at first thought of visiting Old Smoke's tree after nightfall, but I was now so chilly and thoroughly miserable that I decided to make the attempt at once. I knew there was danger along the river trail, but I could not travel through the woods, for every bush and bramble tore my ridged shoulders, and started the blood afresh. I therefore descended to the trail, and taking a slow trot, swung along at the rate of six miles an hour.

It was nearly noon when I finally reached the little run at the foot of Old Smoke's glen, and the sun,

which had come out hot an hour before, was blistering my back. For the last three miles the trail had run through a depression parallel to the river, and some distance back. It was quite hot down in there out of the wind, and the gloomy glen looked cool and inviting. I turned to the left and hurried up the rocky trail alongside the babbling brook which seemed to have its head in a spring beneath the oak. Through the overhanging tree tops, the direct rays of the sun shot down brilliant, perpendicular shafts, and I was admiring their reflections on a trembling cascade, when, above the brawling of the waters, I heard a human voice. Sinking to my knees and hands, I crawled cautiously to the next rise in the trail, and peering above it, saw the forms of two white men, sitting on the roots of the old oak. They were eating, as I could see by the movement of their hands, but their faces I could not distinguish, owing to the gloom that pervaded this retreat. Then, too, their backs were toward me. The sloping shoulders of one, however, looked strangely like those of Beacraft. It must be he and the other,—yes. Those were the bulky square shoulders of McDonald. I crawled into the brush and endeavored to reach a place where I could see better without being seen. This I found impossible, so I crawled over the ridge south of the spring, and there waited until I heard their voices as they went down the glen. They seemed so careless that I concluded that they did not apprehend the approach of our army or its advance scout. I wondered at this, but later learned our men were on the east side of the river six miles south of Chenandoanes, and west of the big creeks which debouch into the curve of the

Genesee near Chenussio; also that these two worthies knew it.

I knew of a shallow ford just north of the mouth of Old Smoke's creek, and believed that the two had come north through Chenandoanes in pursuit of me, had crossed the river and were now going back along the trail which I had come up, along down the east side in the hope of intercepting me as I made my way back to our army. I feared that they would pick out my larger footprints in the soft mold of the river trail, and would comprehend that I had passed north while they were in the glen. But would they not turn and coming back pursue me north? They would be more likely to do this for a distance at least, until they realized the fact that there were no tracks of mine farther north than this little creek. I hurried to the oak, and there beneath the roots in the darkest recess, wrapped round with a British blanket, found my rifle, a horn of powder, forty-seven bullets, a small piece of thin buckskin for patches, a good knife, a bag of parched corn, a leather bonnet, my own buckskin hunting coat, a light shirt of fawn-skin and other articles. The smaller of these had been carefully placed in the pockets of the coat, that I might not miss them in the darkness. Who the young warrior was that Brant sent on the errand, I have never learned, but he certainly did his work well. Rigging out with all haste, I loaded my rifle and hurried down the trail. As I came out of the glen, I heard a sound of horses on the stony path over from the river. Squatting in the brush, I examined my priming and when the two horsemen came out was ready. That they had already seen



my track I knew, from the first word that McDonald uttered. Also, by their evident excitement.

“What dom hinnies we ware to set up there in the glen, an’ let the bird fly past. But then—he’s not fair beyond the next rise, I’m thinkin, an’ there’s a master straight stretch beyond.”

“Yes, Cap’n. You’ll see him for sure up there I reckon. While you ride that way, I’ll watch here. If you see him shoot him in the back. Don’t let him git a hold on ye. No matter if he hasn’t a gun, he’ll charge at ye like a painter, if he sees a ghost of a chance. Take no chances with Skenando’s Quedar. I know him of old.”

“I’d be fair pleased to take him alive, but did or alive, mon, Mac’s the lad that’ll have him,” returned the big fellow as he spurred up the rise to the south. I now realized that I must act quickly. I could have killed Beacraft where he sat, but I had my reasons for wanting him alive. Fortune favored me. He rode his sorry nag just past my hiding place, got down off his saddle and began examining the creek trail. The old horse reached out for the fresher leaves beside the little ford, took two or three short steps ahead, and my range was clear. Beacraft, crouching there in the dust, back towards me, did not hear me as I leaped out, nor did he dream that I was within a mile of him, until I had my hand on the back of his neck. I had never before seen such a look of abject fear on the face of any human being, as was on that narrow phiz of his, when I swung him slowly around and looked down into his eyes.

“Not a squeak,” I whispered, as I dropped my rifle and drew my knife, “or I slit you from chin to crotch.” He was too weak from fear to raise his

own gun, and it dropped from his nerveless grasp into the soft dust of the trail. The old horse started a trifle as I sprang at his master, but soon settled down again and began eating as before. Keeping hold of my captive, I led him to the horse and commanded him to untie the bridle rein, which was a buckskin thong. He was far too nervous to untie any knot, however, so I cut it and tied his hands behind him. Turning the horse south, I gave him a prick with my knife. He jumped two or three times, settled down into a walk, then began eating brush again. I had hoped to send him down the trail, obliterate my own tracks, and then hide in the bushes to shoot McDonald as he came back. But I was not quick enough. As I picked up my own and Beacraft's gun, McDonald reappeared over the rise, took in at a glance the fact that I was armed and had Beacraft prisoner, whirled his horse and spurred through the woods over towards the river. Beacraft's horse now showed life, and neighing loudly, followed. I heard both horses, first one, then the other, plunge into the river, and knew that McDonald had escaped me.

I lost no time, but driving Beacraft before me, up the trail into the glen, soon reached the oak again. Here I searched him hastily, and cutting a slim, light pole, fastened one end to the thong that bound his wrists. His rifle I fastened to my back, and taking mine in one hand, the end of the pole in the other, drove him straight through the woods, over the ridge to the northeast, making as direct a route as I could, toward the north end of Conesus. We crossed several trails, but took none. I feared pursuit and urged him ahead by prods of the sharp pole

against his lean back, until the sweat rolled off him in streams. I guided him much as Uncle Hans used to his oxen, with "haw!" or "gee" as occasion required, and drove him as unmercifully as ever one man was driven by another. Just before dusk, when we had reached the higher ground two miles northeast of the north end of Conesus, having come I judged fifteen miles or more, he collapsed and sank down like a dead man at the head of a narrow ravine. His fear had kept him up well, but I now saw that he could not go farther. He lay there in the dim light, looking up at me like a helpless wounded wolf. I bound his feet together, removed the pole, and rolled him up in my blanket, that he might lie comfortably until I had prepared supper.

Near the head of Conesus, as we came along, I had heard a wounded steer, which had evidently wandered up from the east side of the lake. Leaving my captive, I went back, found the steer, which had a broken leg, caught it, cut its throat and now had plenty of fairly good beef. I carried some of the choicest bits of this to camp, and building a small fire in that sheltered spot, soon roasted a large quantity. I piled this smoking hot on a piece of birch bark, and having mixed up some parched corn paste, unrolled Beacraft from his blanket, untied his hands and bade him sit up and eat. He seemed surprised, but sat up and ate heartily, after which I cut a strong pole, tied his extended arms along it, laid him on his back, drove a crotch over each end of the pole and felt sure I had him fast for the night. I placed some moss under his head, threw half my blanket over him and lying down close beside him soon fell asleep.

The first gray light of the new day awakened me, but he still slept heavily. I did not awaken him until I had prepared breakfast, and when I did so, was surprised at his wild behavior. He seemed light headed. However, he soon came to his wits, but I noticed that he ate little and attributed that to his fear of me. It seemed strange that he should not have shown the same fear the night before though. We started betimes, and while he needed considerable urging at first and seemed weak, before noon I had him well warmed up and we made that day about twenty-five miles. That night he was delirious, and I noted high fever with alternate chills. Much as I had planned on torturing him, I now found my heart failing me, and while he made no complaint the next morning, and seemed to expect no mercy at my hands, I was easier on him that day, and did not push him above twenty miles.

Our route had been through a very open country and travel was comparatively easy, yet when the sun set, he seemed weaker than at any period of the journey, and was at times mumbling to himself as he walked along. As had been my practice, I sought out a narrow ravine for a camping place, and tying him to a tree, skirmished around a bit in the hope of getting a deer, for I was entirely out of meat. My stock of parched corn was also low, and sooner or later I must renew my supply of food. I was this night about midway between the north ends of Cayuga and Owasco, and had I dared leave my prisoner for a few hours, knew of a solitary interval three or four miles to the south, where I was quite sure I could get a deer, or another of the Indian cattle. A rabbit and a woodchuck were all the meat

that I could obtain after an hour's ramble, however, and with these slung to my belt I returned to camp, just at dark. Indeed, it was quite dark in the ravine, and feeling my way I clambered cautiously down to the place where I was sure my captive lay bound, to find him gone. A hastily improvised torch showed him lying thirty yards distant, so twisted up in the blanket as to be nearly smothered. Indeed, he seemed insensible, and judging that he had rolled to this spot in an attempt to escape, I carried him back and set about building my fire without attempting to resuscitate him. When I had my fire built, I found him recovered from his stupor, but quite delirious and in a high fever. I bled him a trifle and he seemed more natural, but very weak. As I offered him food, he shook his head and for the first time asked me the question: "What be ye a goin' to do with me?"

"I haven't fully decided," I replied, "but I think I shall roast you, until you give up that secret of yours."

"What secret?" I made no reply and he went on:

"I hain't gin it up yet?" he inquired anxiously.

I shook my head.

"I wuz afeard I might, with this cussed fever on me. I tell ye right now, ye kin skin me alive an' ye won't git it."

"We'll see about that," I returned. "Just as soon as I get you out of this Indian country, we'll see. You're sick now, and I can't hurt a sick man." He closed his eyes and made no reply. Finally he opened them again and as I finished eating, lay looking at me.

"What ye a done, ef I hadn't walked?"

"Oh! I'd carried you maybe. You're light."

"Curse ye! I knowed ye would," he muttered. Then he seemed to fall asleep. I crawled under the blanket beside him, and we both slept until morning. I awoke to find him very ill. He was so weak that do what I would, I could not make him walk. It was evident that his weakness was not assumed. I was also greatly alarmed as I noted small red elevations of the skin on his face and neck here and there, hardly noticeable to the sight, but plain to the touch. It might be measles. It might be something worse. At all events, he was sick and helpless. I could not leave him in that condition. That day I carried him on my back fourteen miles, as I judged, and a hard day's work it was. He seemed to lie in a stupor in the blanket, with which I fastened him to my back. This night I reached an abandoned log cabin near the north end of Skaneateles lake. In the peak of an outhouse nearby, I found a pack of peltry, and in the centre of this some fishing tackle and a two-quart case of rum. Had this cabin been near the trail, which ran east and west farther north, and which I was all my route avoiding, this find of mine must have long before been taken by some of the numerous parties passing, but fortunately for me, it was not. With the skins, I made him as comfortable a bed as I could, and having forced some of the liquor down him, went to the lake, a fourth of a mile south, to catch some fish. I was but a few minutes in catching a fine pair of pickerel, and with them returned to the cabin to find my prisoner sitting up and babbling in delirium, while the pimples that had so alarmed me in the morning, now brought out by

the liquor, had increased to a dark red, angry looking pustule, which, from what I had heard of the disease, I felt sure indicated small pox.

“Well! Whatever it is,” I mused, “he’s a human being and so am I.” I did not then know that I had had the disease when a child, even before this wretch had stolen me from my parents, and my fears were now greater than any I had ever before experienced, I think. Nevertheless, I determined to stick by my prisoner, and as this cabin seemed as comfortable a place as any near at hand, I prepared for a long siege. Rummaging about in the loft, I came upon some cooking utensils, a number of wool shirts, and a small quantity of wheaten flour and corn meal. The week that followed was one of the most tedious I ever experienced. I dug roots and herbs, such as should brew a strong cathartic for myself, as I had heard that was the best way of avoiding this dread disease, and what with my hunting, fishing and nursing was nearly worn out. There was an abundance of small game and fish, and the third morning I shot a small doe, one of three, so we had plenty to eat, or rather I did. Beacraft ate nothing but gruel of birds and flour, and later took nothing but liquor. He was too weak to speak above a whisper except in his worst delirium. I had all along watched him in the hope of catching some inkling of the secret I so desired, but only twice did he seem living over the scenes of that mystery. Then his delirium was frightful. The first of this nature came the third night of our stay.

“Oh Major! Don’t have the niggers whip me!” he would shriek as he attempted to arise from his couch. This he screamed several times, and then

cowering next the logs, he whined in a pitiful, weak voice: "You say 'twill larn me better but 'twon't. My dad he larned me it. Hans Diehl was borned a thief, and I'm his breed. Yes! I'm his breed."

"What'd you steal, Ben?" I inquired gravely, as he lay staring at me.

"You know, Major. You know! Don't hector me an' look at me like that! I'm afeard enough o' you a'ready. My dad made me do it."

I questioned him further, but he made no reply above his breath. The next night he was more violently delirious than before. The disease had now reached that frightful stage when the patient is an object of horror as well as pity. He could but just see out of his swollen eyes, but I noticed that he kept them on me as I sat between him and the firelight.

"Oh! I see ye a settin' thar, Major! But I've kim back. I'd shoot ye whar ye set ef I dared, but I dassent. I'll steal the cub though. That's the way I'll fix ye. I ain't nothin' agin' Miss Sally, but I don't know no other way. Barbie'll do what I tell her." Here his voice dropped to a whisper. "Barbie! Barbie! Air ye ever comin? Hurry up, gal! Oh! ye got 'im! Put yer hand over his mouth. Be keerful! The major's lookin' this way! Be keerful!"

I turned my head from him. "There! Climb in! He's lookin' the other way now!" After a long interval of silence he muttered again. "An' so ye're goin' back on me, be ye Barbie? Yer a doin' it fer the cub. Ye're a fool to stay here an' let the ole man abuse ye. Let's take the cub and dig out. Ben here in the Mohawk valley long enough. Oh! ye're 'fraid to go inter the Injun country, be ye?"



Wanter stay here? Wall, stay! I know I runned away from ye once, but I'm younger'n he is. He ain't good to ye? Wall! I'll kill him." Then he fèll asleep to lay quiet for an hour. At the end of that time he suddenly started up again. He was now the most repulsive looking object I have ever seen. "It ain't you, Major! No! It's Quedar. He looks more like you than he does like his dead dad. His daddy never'd a let ye lick me, Major. The Judge wouldn't a let ye. Oh! It's you is it, Quedar." His swollen features here contorted while that peculiar mirthless laugh came from between his swollen lips. "Ye're a settin' thar before the fire, jest's yer uncle uster do. Ye don't know who done fer the ole man, do ye? I fixed him! He misused Barbie! He bragged on it, he did! Wouldn't gimme them papers! I fixed him. Git out thar, Hans Diehl! Git back! Git away from me! It's yer spook! Ye can't fool me! It's yer spook! No live man could run round here an' grin like that, with a spear stuck thro his gizzard. Git out! Oh murder! He's got holt o' me! Help! Help!"

Here I caught his hands as he struggled weakly, and looking at me he lay quiet to soon close his eyes and fall asleep. This was the worst night he had, and I could see that the disease had turned, or was about to, when morning came. However, he was so weak the next three days, and lay in a stupor so much of the time, that I feared for his life. Indeed, I hardly hoped to pull him through. Not once did he speak aloud, and at times he seemed hardly breathing. I forced nourishment down his throat, and made the best fight for his life I could. The eleventh morning of our stay, after a sleep of several

hours, I awoke suddenly to find him lying there with open eyes, looking at me. Much as I had thought I hated the wretch, I now found myself greatly moved at his apparent improvement.

"Thank God! You're better!" I exclaimed fervently, and it was with a voice of sincere pity, that I asked him how he felt. He made no answer for a space of several minutes. Then he asked weakly enough:

"What's ben ailin' me?"

"Small pox!" I replied briefly.

"An' you ben a tendin' of me?"

"I've done the best I could alone, these two weeks past."

"You look like a shadder. What'd ye take the trouble ter nuss me fer?"

"Why! I'd have done as much for one of my friends and why shouldn't I for my worst enemy?"

"Think I'm a goin' to pull through, Quedar?"

"Why! I hope so. The worst of the disease is over, but you're so weak. However, as soon as you're able to travel, I'm going to carry you where you can get better treatment."

"Ye'd better let me die. They'll hang me down at the settlements."

"Well! Then I won't take you there. The fact of the matter is, Beacraft, I'm going to stand by you until you're able to care for yourself. If you were well and strong, I'd take you out and tie you up and whip you, until you—"

"No ye wouldn't. You're more like yer father, than yer uncle the major was. I been looney, but I ben watchin' ye jest the same. I kim ter that conclusion 'fore I lost my wits. Yer Judge Fisher's own

boy, even if ye have got the looks o' that brute of a major. I'll tell ye all about it bymeby. I'm—I'm tired now." And his swollen lids drooped. He slept.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### BEACRAFT SPEAKS

I CANNOT as I would, convey to you the thoughts that possessed me as I sat there on that bleak fall afternoon awaiting Beacraft's return from the mysterious land of dreams. My eyes hardly left his face. Several times I was frightened nearly out of my wits by the fear that he had ceased breathing. In truth, he did at times seem more like a dead man than a live one. Owing to the affection of the nasal passages, ever an accompaniment of this dread disease, he seemed unable to breathe through his nose, and lay with open mouth. At times, he gurgled and half strangled in his efforts to get breath. At other times and especially after one of those strangling periods, he drew in a deep breath and with a sigh like that accompanying death, expelled it. Then for a space of a minute he would lie without motion and it seemed as if he never would catch breath again. Just as twilight was reminding me that I must soon light a torch or sit in darkness, he suddenly awoke. He was much better. I could see that and felt greatly encouraged. I gave him a drink and some gruel, for which he seemed grateful. After that I fixed his bed so that he lay easier.

Then he closed his eyes and I thought him sleeping. He was not however, for I soon saw tears

forcing themselves out upon his swollen cheeks and running down each side his narrow temples. Suddenly he opened his eyes:

“Yer name’s Fisher. Did I tell ye? I lied that time I said ’twuz Ehlerston.”

“No. You didn’t tell me exactly, Beacraft. I inferred as much though, from what you said awhile back—before you slept. And so my father was a judge?”

“Yesser! An’ a good one too. Ef he’d a lived, I might a ben diffrent from what I be. But that ain’t the story. Gimme a little o’ that firewater, will ye? I’m weaker’n a cat?”

I mixed him a generous allowance, and slowly fed it to him from a wooden spoon which I had whittled out. It seemed to brace him up amazingly, and in a low whining voice, but now well above a whisper, he went on.

“Yer father was Judge Donald Fisher of Fisher’s Corners near Staunton in Varginny. He an’ his brother—Major Duncan ’twas arterwards, kim in thar when they wuz boys ’long o’ yer granfather, who come the time Squire Burden got the big grant from Lord Halifax. That grant o’ five hundred thousand acres I mean. Never heerd o’ that, did ye. No. Of course ye hain’t. Well, I’ll tell ye ’bout it an’ all yer people so’s to relieve yer mind. I tell ye right now though”—here the old wolfish glitter came back into his eyes—“ye’d a never got it outen me by whippin, ner yet by burnin’. Ye look too much like yer uncle the major, when ye make threats. Damn him, anyway! But you be yer father’s own boy. Thar ain’t any use o’ denyin’ that. This takin’ care o’ me, is one o’ his tricks all over agin.

I remember well the time he sent his own doctor to pick the slugs outen my ole dad's back, what the ole man got from a gun in the hands o' one o' the judge's niggers, when the ole man was a totin off a hog one night. Wasn't nothin' compelled him to do that, fer he wuz judge o' that deestric an' sides, nobody'd made any fuss ef the ole man had a died. Same down thar, as he wuz up here in the valley—jest ornery an' no 'count.

“ Well! Ter go back a bit—yer father an' uncle kim in 'bout 1735, twenty-one year 'fore you wuz born. They're o' Scotch descent an' you're 'bout as good a strain o' Scot as there is in these colonies. Yer father's grandfather was a brother o' Mary Fisher, who kim over from the ole country 'bout one hundred and twenty-five year ago, made such a stir up around Boston town and finerly founded the Quaker society in this country. Yer father'n uncle kim inter the Shandydo either in 1735 er 6. I dunno which. Any way, they wuzn't growed up. Both on 'em wuz sent back down the river ter be eddicated. Yer father kim back a lawyer an' yer uncle a surveyor, but he gin up surveyin' an' went inter business in Staunton, 'long 'bout 1750. You're the picter o' yer uncle. That's the reason I hated ye so as ye begun to grow up. You're a little brawnier'n what he was an' ye git that spring o' yeer'n from yer mother's people. She wuz Scot too. Ye orter be better lookin' ye be, fer I swar, yer father wuz a hansum man an' yer mother wuz the purtiest girl I ever see. I never see her but twict, but she was tall an' slim, with bright eyes, raven black hair an' white teeth. Her father was a Scot Highlander, kim over with one o' Burden's Hunderd Famblys an' I never see

one o' them MacGregors what couldn't jump the height o' their head. Male er female—made no diffrunce. When I first noticed you, you wuz a norphan. Ye see 'long in 1758 or thereabouts, small pox swep' through the valley. Some Injuns brung it over the mountains an' some Irish brung it up the river. It's allus hangin' 'round the Injuns 'n Irish. I expec thars whar I got it this time. 'Bout four week ago I wuz over to try an' put up some o' them Squatchegee tramps to go over to Sullivan's army an' spread it. Three or four cases jest comin' down with it. Ef I cu'd a got them to go over an' pass 'emselves off as Oneidys an' mix through the army purty well, I'd a fixed you fellers, wouldn't I?" Here he chuckled and appeared more like his own evil self, than he had since this sickness came upon him.

"Ye see I thought I'd had it too, that time yer father'n mother died with it. I wuz sick an' even my own mother—she 'at I git my name frum—she wuz a livin' with ole Hans yit—they all left me. I wuz sick an' outen my head a few days, but I kim out all right. Must a ben measles. Must a ben! Must a ben!" he repeated musingly.

"Yes. But what about my father and mother, Beacraft?"

"Oh! They had it all right enough. Yer father died an' yer mother died an' you'd a died, ef it hadn't a ben for Barbie. She wuz a girl yer mother's mother'd brought from the ole country. She had it purty hard, Barbie did. Never seemed real smart arterwards in her head. Never'd notice me 'fore that sickness, nuther. Must affected her head. Must be! Must be—"

"Never mind about her, Beacraft. Did I have it that time?"

"Oh yes. You wuzn't nothin' but a babby, but you had it. Why! 'Bout everybody had it that fall. Spread all over Varginny. They died like sheep. Yer uncle, the major—" here he cursed him again—" he'd gone down on the James river ter git married, else he'd a had it. He brung back his young wife an' do ye know, that little milk an' water thing, as she looked ter be, she jest organized things so'st them what had had it took keer o' them what wuz a comin' down; an' she jest stamped out the hull bizness. O, she's smart an' capable an' she's a fine lookin' little womern too. She cried when I wuz whipped. I dunno's I'd orter a stole you as I did. I dunno's I—I dunno's—" here the poor tired wretch closed his eyes, and fell asleep again.

I had learned the most important part of the information I was seeking, and fearing the consequences if I pressed him too far without rest, I let him sleep. I myself lay down and slept until dawn, and then awoke to find him awake and rebellious.

"What wuz I a tellin' you yesterday, Quedar?" he asked.

"Oh! a lot about my family," I replied.

"Wall! I wuz jest a wishin' I hadn't. Ye look better to me now, but when ye lay thar asleep, ye looked so much like yer uncle, the Major, I'm damned ef I hadn't a good notion ter try an' slit yer throat. Yer look diffrunt now, sence yer eyes is open. I jess wish't I hadn't talked so much yister-day though. Say, Quedar! What ye a goin' ter do with me?"

I sat and pondered a long time before I made re-



ply. Finally I said: "Well, Beacraft! I suppose if I did my duty, I'd take you down into the valley, or to Albany, but I'll tell you what I'll do. You tell me all the rest, then go with me to Hans Diehl's old house and help me to hunt for that old trunk containing the clothes I wore when I was stolen and I'll guarantee to let you go, scot free."

He lay some time silent, evidently meditating upon this, before he resumed his story, but finally did so and talked more freely than on any former occasion.

"It's queer ye can't remember yer uncle, Quedar. He named ye. Yer right name is Duncan Christopher—Chris Fisher ye'd a ben called, ef ye'd a ben left in them parts, 'cause yer uncle was called Duncan. It's a fine proputtty ye'd a had too. It's a waitin' thar fur ye yet, I reckon. Lemme see! Yer father had twelve thousand acre in one piece down southeast o' Staunton, an' seven thousand six hundred up on 'tother side o' the village, an' he had 'em stocked with niggers an' cattle an' hosses. An' he had lots of other proputtty. Money maker, yer father wuz. Ef he'd a lived, he'd a ben the richest man in them parts. Yer uncle, the Major, he wuz all military. Guess 'twuz borned in 'im. Uster leave the runnin' o' all the plantations to yer dad, an' after he died, to yer Aunt Sally. Queer you can't 'member him. S'pose 'twuz 'cause he wa'n't home more. Wall! He kim home from somers over the mountains one day,—ben off after some Injun hoss thieves, I reckon. Anyway, he kim home an' his overseer tole him how I'd ben stealin'. He'd run my ole dad off fer the same trick the fall afore, or thought he had, but the ole man had jess nacherly

gone over the ridge an' wuz a hangin' on there, sendin' out me an' two or three other youngsters ter steal fer him. Well! they ketched me that mornin' he got home,—an' talk about lickins! The Major stood by an' urged the niggers on. They jess had a harness tug tied to an aigin, an' when they got through o' me, I wuz raw from my head to my heels. Got the scars yit. That kinder scart the ole man, an' he lit out. Yer Aunt Sally, she jest felt orful, an' I 'member she cried over it,—Barbie said she did, anyway. I got round Barbie all right, arter I got well. Swore I was innercent an' all that. An' then, jest to git even with the ole Major, I put up the job to steal you. I wuz jess goin' ter scare him, ye know, an' I coaxed Barbie inter helpin' me. Then I scart her fer a doin' of it ontill she wanted to go 'long. The Major wuz away that time. Yer Aunt Sally, who run all the bizness anyway, wuz goin' 'bout twenty-five mile over 'tother side o' the river, the next mornin' airly, an' I jess took ye at a mighty good time.

“I wuz clear beyand the 'Tomic an' well inter Maryland 'fore they got home an' found ye wuz gone. Wall! Ter make a long story shorter, we wuz weeks an' weeks sneakin' round through the woods over inter the Mohawk valley. An' thar, down near Caughuywagy, the ole man, he settled down. I wanted to go funder, but he wouldn't hear to it. Claimed he wuz goin' to turn over a new leaf and tried to. I allus found Ole Sir Willum 'bout such a man as the Major. I runned away from there to keep from gittin another hidin'. The ole man could a helped me outen that scrape, but he wanted Barbie, an' when I runned away, he done all he

could to keep me a runnin'. I let him have her, an' I stayed away purty stiddy fer nigh onto twelve year. Then I got an' idear, an' the day I got that vennyson o' you, I'd jess ben down ter the house to propose it to him. But he wuz jess nacherly ornery that day. He wouldn't lemme have yer cloes an' things sos't I cu'd go back an' git some money outen yer Aunt Sally. One word brought on another an' I jess nacherly fixed him. I guess that's 'bout all there is on it, 'cept I never ben sorry I done 'im up, seein' the way he treated my mother. Wouldn't even bring the ole woman along when we left Varginny. She died thar a few years ago."

"But what about those baby clothes and other things, Beacraft?"

"Oh! They're proberly 'round the ole man's place somers. Don't make much diffrence anyway. Yer uncle's dead an' yer Aunt Sally's runnin' things jess's she uster. She'd pick you out from 'mong a thousand. Thar ain't 'nother sech a built man in all North Ameriky."

"But what became of my uncle? How did he die?"

"Oh! He wuz along o' your man Washington an' Braddock an' the rest. They found him arter that battle with dead Injuns and Frenchers all about him. He wuz a devil ter fight, Dunc Fisher wuz. Braddock didn't have ter drive him outen behind the trees, like he did the rest. But he wa'n't dead when they found him. They got him home alive. He wuz called Major arter that, for he got promoted. He wuz only a captain in the milishy 'fore he went inter that fight, but he got the title some time durin' that war."

“ He must have been as large a man as old Tamalagua. Say, Beacraft, what did you ever kill that old Indian for? ”

“ Oh! I allus had it in fer him. He an' that cat o' his was allus sneakin' round at night. He run onto us that time we wuz a comin' north with you. That wuz afore he got his cat, an' I don't think he was quite so looney then. He charged us with stealin' you, an' he knowed the ole Major. I wuz allus feared you an' he'd git together an' he'd tell ye. That wuz one reason why I allus wanted ter fix him. I dunno's I'd done it though, ef he hadn't knocked me over that night fer killin' his cat. That cat o' his, I allus was afeard on. Driv me out inter Seneky lake one day, when I wuz a tryin' ter sneak 'round an' drop his master, as he lay asleep in the bresh. Durn cat like ter froze me ter death that day. My gun got wet when I jumped, an' I cuddent shoot him. Thar I wuz, floatin' 'round on that log, cussin an' helpless. An' yer uncle? Oh, I forgot. Wall! He wa'n't never well arter that French an' Injun war. He done some bizness, but he wa'n't much 'count. Some wound he got, time Braddock got whaled. He set great store by you. Seemed ter think more on ye than as if ye war his own. That's why I wuz so farce fer stealin' ye. I knew it'd fix him. Did too. They say he on'y lived a year arterward, an' died mournin' 'caus he hadn't no heir. Never had any younguns of his own. Oh, I fixed him a plenty. I got even with the Major,” and muttering to himself, while an ugly smile of malice contorted his swollen features, the rascal dropped off asleep again. I arose and walked out into the open air.

It seemed to me as if I were dreaming. As if all I had heard could not be true. I looked up at the sombre fall sky—it seemed bright to me,—drew in a deep breath of the bracing atmosphere, and started to walk down towards the lake shore, when a feeling of such thankfulness came upon me that it seemed as if I must go somewhere, kneel down and thank God. I resisted this desire until I reached a little glade some distance down along the lake shore. Here, falling on my knees under a spreading tree, I raised my voice in prayer. What cared I if a thousand lurking foes heard me? I must relieve my overcharged soul, and I did. When at last I arose from my knees, it was to find Murphy standing at some distance, regarding me with wondering eye. I rushed toward him with an exclamation of joy. Then the thought of the smallpox infection in my clothing, flashed upon me and I came to such a sudden halt that I nearly fell. “Tim!” I shouted. “Thank God! Thank God! I’ve got the smallpox! I’m full of smallpox! Keep off! Keep off!” Gaunt, haggard and unkempt from my vigils of the past few weeks, I must have looked like a lunatic as I said this. Indeed I did not know exactly what I was saying. I only knew that I was glad to see Tim, and then the thought of smallpox, coming like a flash had impelled me to warn him in the same breath.

“Craazy as a bid boog, so he is!” muttered Tim, as I halted in my rush toward him, and he looked as if he would have liked to run.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### MURPHY PUTS IN A WORD

**O**FTEN after that meeting on the Skaneateles did I laugh at Tim for the cowardice he showed, and it was ever a sore subject with him. I am confident that had I run toward him, he would have taken to his heels. However, I did not. I dared not go nearer him. As he seemed at a loss what to say to me, I finally accosted him again.

“Tim! You poor little coward, you needn’t run away from me. I’m no more crazy than you are. What I say about the smallpox is true, however. I escaped from the Indians as you may have heard, captured Beacraft who pursued me, and started for the settlements with him, driving him before me. The third day out, he was taken sick. I didn’t know what ailed him and carried him on my back one day. The next day, I found he had smallpox. I’ve nursed him through it and I think he’ll live. He lies up here in that cabin Sir John built for a fishing camp before the war. So if you’ve never had smallpox, you’d better keep your distance.”

“Smallpox is it?” said Tim advancing. “Shure! I had that same whin I was a livin’ down in ole Varginny twenty year ago and more. Kim here ye spalpane, an’ give an account o’ yeresilf. Why, man, ye’re nothin’ but a bag o’ bones, an’ the skin drawn over thim.”

I needed no second invitation, but running up to little Tim, gave him such a shaking up as convinced him I was still in possession of my strength. Then we sat down to compare notes. I first told him all that had happened to me since that day of the Groveland ambushade, as well as all that Beacraft had told me. When I came to mention my real name and spoke of my people in the upper Shenandoah, Tim sprang to his feet in excitement.

“An’ so ye’re wan o’ thim Fishers? Well! May the divil pitchfork me fer not thinkin’ o’ that same before. I’ll bet if me owld dad had a ben round ye long, he’d a picked yer pedigree. Ah! But it’s well do I remimber that awful toime. Yere mother an’ faather, God rist their sowls, died doin’ mine a kindness, Pather? Did ye know that? No. Av coorse ye didn’t. Well! I’ll tell ye. An’ foorst, me bye, lemme say to ye, that ye’re bred of the noblest blood that God iver let run. There’s no finer pable outside of owld Ireland than ye’rn. Kape whisht now, an’ I’ll tell ye the whole story. ’Twas in ’56 durin’ the owld war, that my faather an’ mother an’ their three childern, me not yet turned six an’ the oldest, lift Jarsey for the southwist. Faather’d heard great tales o’ the Frinch Brood country, where Sevier, Robertson an’ the rist o’ thim backwoods ginerals do be givin’ the Ridcoats fits these days, an’ as the war seemed movin’ narth, he thot the place to raise a foine family was south. We started late in the fall o’ ’56, an’ early in ’57 got to owld Staunton on the Shanydo, whin we all tuk sick. Pfwat the divil ailed us, we didn’t know, but we soon found out, for we had the smallpox. There we was, all sick as dith an’ not aven a

nagur to tind us. Me poor mother died first an' the twin babies follyed the nixt maarning, faather an' I so sick wid the disase that we didn't know whin they wint. We was all lyn' in an impty cattle pen we'd tuk possission of. Whose 'twas we didn't know. The maarnin' mother died, I come to me sines enough to hear a woman's voice outside, an' she upbraidin' some nagurs an' tellin' thim to come in an' care for us. She thrittened if they didn't, she'd come hersilf. She wuddent stan' by an' see human bein's die wid-out care.

"That lady was Mrs. Judge Fisher, an' I've the divil a bit av a doubt 'twas yere mother. She didn't ask the nagurs that niver'd had it. The nagurs that had was that feard of it that they wuddent come till she made 'em. Two aunties finally did come an' 'twas thim careless cratur's tuk the disase in their cloes to yere faather's house. Yere mother died foorst. Yere faather stood by her, an' he wint nixt, and thin half the neighborhood had it an' died. My faather staid an' noorsed the sick afther he got able, as long as he was naded, an' thin he tuk me an' him narth to Pinnsylvany. I've heerd him tell, time an' agin of yere Aunt Sally. She had more sinse than all the rist. She was not there, foorst along, but whin she did come, she organized things in a hurry. She'd remimber the owld man, annyhow, an' he's the roosther ye want to take down there wid ye. Ye've no nade to go spookin' 'round ole Hans Diehl's shanty fer yere proof. Jist lave this crather here to shift fer himself, go change yere clothin', take a dip in the lake an' come 'long o' me an' the Kernil's min."

"The Colonel's men, Tim? Are you with a party?"



"Shure! Kernil Gansevoort an' a hunderd min air oover ferninst that hill to the narth. We lift Chinisee the twentieth, tin days back, an' we're goin' on down below owld Foort Schuyler to pick up some supplies lift there lasht spring."

"But, Tim, I can't leave this poor wretch, and I won't."

"Oh! The divil fly away wid yer nonsinse. Pfwat good is owld Diehl's spawn to dacint sosiety annyhow? Ye do be compromisin' yeresilf ivery minute ye stay wid him. If he hadn't that disase, faith I'd take the divil down to owld Schoharie an' hang him."

"No you wouldn't do any such thing. He's got my word and I'll see him on his feet again."

At these words Tim grew so angry, that he jumped clear from the ground. "Bad cess to yere Dutch pighidedness! Go jump in the lake an' drown yeresilf, ye fool. Gimme anny more such talk as that an—"

Here I caught him by the neck as was my custom, and shook him into silence. "See here, Tim! You know me and you know what I'll do in this case, if you'll only stop to think. No matter if I never see home nor friends again, no matter if I remain Dutch in your estimation."

"Whisht! Be the powers! But I forgot somethin'. I've a letther from your gurl. Kim in the day we lift the army. His riverence wa'n't there. No more ware ye. Some swore ye was did, which I thot mesilf, but as manny thot ye might break away or git yere freedom somehow, an' so, as I was a goin' back to Schoharie, they give me the letther. Here it is an' it's from that same gal yere so swate

on, or me name's not Timothy." Wriggling from my grasp, Tim reached into an inner pocket of his frock and produced it. He had delicacy enough to walk off a distance while I opened and read it. Even to this day I cannot think of that letter without a feeling such as men have when they think of some great danger of their lives. Had it been different, I know not what might have happened to me. I am not sure but that I should have stopped in the backwoods and remained what I was fast becoming again and had at one time been—half Indian. I do believe that such a letter as ninety-nine women out of a hundred would have written under those circumstances, would have ruined my after life. Knowing as I did, or as I thought I did, the woman whose writing I now looked upon, it was with the greatest effort—one of the greatest of all my life, that I summoned courage to open and read. I have always kept that letter. It is among my dearest earthly treasures, and shall be handed down to future generations, that they may know what manner of woman their ancestress was.

“PHILADELPHIA, *Sept. 5th, 1779.*”

“MY DEAR QUEDAR:

“Yours of August 22nd just arrived. I am the happiest girl alive. And so you have finally told me that you love me; that you cannot help it, and always shall. Thank God for those words Quedar. I have hoped for as much for three years, but it seemed to me as if I hoped for too much. Over and over again have I asked myself, what there was in a nature like mine, to win the love of such a noble man as my big brother Quedar. I have tried as best I could, to make myself worthy. I have prayed for strength of mind and intellect. Alas, I was at times weak enough and foolish enough to pray for increased beauty, that I might win you—as if mere physical beauty could win so great a

soul as yours. And now you say you love me and always shall. I need not tell you the same. Come to me as soon as you honorably can and I will prove it to you. You say that you love me and yet you will not presume to offer yourself to me, because you have not a name and social position. Because, perchance, I might lose pence or pounds by accepting you. Quedar, that is the only unkind act you have ever shown me. Do you thus estimate my womanhood? Do you think for an instant, in your darkest moments even, that I would refuse you for that? It seems so useless for me to say this, knowing my heart as I do, but for your dear sake, I will say it, here and now. I would rather take you for my husband as you are, than any prince or peer in all the world. You will not always lack fame or fortune. That I know, for you are a king among men. But no matter what you may win; no matter if you make what the world may call a failure, if you remain as good a man, as noble a man as the Quedar I have known, I shall be content. In cottage or castle, I will strive my best to be your helpmate all our days. I pray you Quedar, do not let your exaggerated sense of honor, stand between your happiness and mine. You would not be just to either of us, if you did this. Believe me, dear Quedar, and take me at my word. It may be unmaidenly of me to say all this, but I feel that it is just what a true woman, such as I am striving to be, should say under such circumstances. You have not asked me if I love you Quedar, you have simply made your confession to me. I too would fain confess, and I say to you now, that I love you as I can never love another. Come to me Quedar when you can. If you are in sickness or trouble of any kind and cannot come, send word and I will come to you.

“YOUR OWN EDITH.”

“Be Gorry! an’ that’s not bad news,” remarked Tim, as he came back towards me, “fer if iver I see happiness sprid over anny man’s face while radin’ a letther, it’s on that same grimy mug o’ yer’n.”

I strove to say something in reply, but not a word could I utter.

"I congratulate ye, me bye," he continued, extending his hand, "an' if iver I mate her, I'll put a blisither on the tip o' me tongue, tellin' pfwat luck she's in."

"She'd probably tell you you were carrying coals to Newcastle, Tim."

"An pfwat the divil wud she be sayin' that fur?"

"Why! judging from her letter, she's foolish enough to feel sure she's in luck now."

"Well, me bye, if she knows it an' says it to ye, she's a rare judge o' dacint min, fer do ye know, that's the wan thing ye do be nadin—somebody to give ye some consate o' yersilf. It's jist as I towld ye, months an' years ago,—ye be the biggest dom fool for a man that knows as much as ye, that iver I see. Ye've that much conscience ye'd be dishonest—wid yersilf," he added, with a roguish twinkle in his eye.

"Well, Tim, I'm keeping you. I guess you're right about there being no necessity of my visiting Diehl's old place. You go ahead now, and join your party. Don't say a word about having seen me, and I'll join you at Schoharie within two weeks. You might get some one you can trust in Schoharie to write to Sullivan in Philadelphia, he'll be there before the letter, telling him I've escaped and am working my way back to Schoharie. Send the letter to Beatty and he'll report to Sullivan. Hold on! I'll write it myself and send it by you. Sneak a change of clothing for me and leave it out under the smallest flat rock opposite the Canajoharie Pot, will

you? I don't wish to carry smallpox into Schoharie. Have you any clothing about camp that you can leave somewhere out here in the woods? I must start Beacraft out of here free from chance of communicating the disease."

"I'd sooner lave the divil a dost of pisen, but to privint a quarrel wid ye, I'll lave him a change o' me own on the hill near the spring that fades this run. I'd do the same for ye, me bye, but there's nothin' in our outfit ye cu'd draw over that big frame o' yer'n. There be some large sizes in the lot below, though. If ye want to avoid all danger though, an' kape the clo'es ye hev, fin an old schmoke house an' roast the divil outen these. That same'll do for the smallpox. As fer kapin still about matin ye,—I'll do no such thing. The Kernil'll repoort ye as bein' a brave lad fer kapin away from the army, whin ye found ye had the disase. Faith! an' I'll make a hero of ye in spite o' yer tathe. An' now I must be movin'. The Kernil'll be wantin' to staart out an' as the felly pfwhat was a goin' to be hung remarked—'there won't be a divil av a thing done till I git there.'" Here he started up the lake shore on a trot, and as he reached the first curve in the path up to the trail, turned to wave his hand at me and sing out: "Oh Pather! Be sure ye take good care o' yere gurl's best felly!" I laughed and nodded and with this parting advice he was gone.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### CALLED TO PHILADELPHIA

**T**HE recovery of my patient was rapid, and within ten days from the morning upon which Murphy left me, I felt justified in leaving Beacraft to care for himself. Before starting him on his way, I compelled him to bathe, put on the new outfit and leave all his old outfit, except his gun, in the cabin. This cabin I then set fire to and burned to the ground. Much to his surprise, I then informed him that he could go; that I had changed my mind about requiring his company into the valley. Of course he did not know that I had seen Murphy, and while I judged from his actions that he was greatly relieved that I did not ask him to go with me, yet to do him justice, he insisted that he would go if I wished it. I made some trivial excuse, and having given him his gun, some ammunition, and an old knife I had found on an excursion up the lake, I bade him be off. He came up to me as he was about to leave and seemed desirous of shaking hands, but I could not bring myself to that. I heard what he had to say about remembering me if ever I was captured by any of his side and telling him that I hoped he would keep his promise, or do as much for some one else, I started him and watched him until he was well on his way. That was the last time I ever saw him.

I took a roundabout way through the hills, and was a full day more than I need have been in making my way to the vicinity of Stanwix, or Schuyler as it had more recently been named, on the present site of Rome. I had some difficulty in avoiding a band of Onondagas, who despite the chastisement Col. Goose Van Schaick had given them the spring before, were yet hanging about their lakes. Indeed, they seemed quite bold, for when I saw them, they were out east of Oneida, along Wood creek. I did not visit the fort as I did not dare to for fear of contagion in my clothing, and also because I had no need to, having secured a quantity of corn from a white man whom I found inhabiting a cabin in a small clearing, two miles south of the fort.

Below Herkimer I felt comparatively safe, and there, near the river, fumigated my clothing in an old smoke-house, by burning charcoal under it. This job was a tedious one, as it occupied two days, during all of which time I was obliged to sit about my fire, wrapped in an old blanket, I had appropriated from the outfit Murphy left for Beacraft. This process of purification completed, I took a bath in the Mohawk's icy waters, threw away the blanket, appropriated an old batteau I found on a rift near Nellis' ford, and with a pole and a rude paddle, made fast time, night and day, down the river. As I expected, I found help at Little Falls to carry my heavy batteau, for I now met soldiers or friendly Indians almost hourly by day. October 18th, I reached Schoharie without incident and was well received, Murphy having paved the way for me, by relating my capture and escape, with Beacraft transformed into a wounded Oneida, whom I had cared for and

buried. Even Woolsey offered me hearty welcome, although I knew he did it to disarm suspicion, and to it I could not respond, as I might have done had I not known the underhand work he had been guilty of.

No sooner did I reach Schoharie, than I determined to apply for a furlough. Just how to proceed, was something of a puzzle to me, for while I had never been formally enlisted, I had been throughout the recent expedition, under the general command of Major Parr. I talked the matter over with Murphy, and we had about come to the conclusion to write to General Sullivan, when I received from Lieutenant Erkuries Beatty at Philadelphia, a very friendly and mysterious letter. Accompanying it was an order from Major Parr, countersigned by Colonel Morgan, requiring my presence at that city. This order was brief and formal, and was enclosed within the letter from my friend, the lieutenant. I therefore supposed I must first find him, as the order did not require my reporting to any officer in that city. The letter was evidently written in great haste and read as follows :

“ PHILADELPHIA, *November 10th, 1779.*

“ FRIEND QUEDAR :

“ Heard but three hours since of your whereabouts and beg to inform you, that your presence is at once required in this city. Cannot now explain, but assure you it is for your interest, as well as a matter of duty that you come direct. We were mustered out for four months, at Easton, Oct. 22nd. Companies breaking up, subject to recall. Come to me here,—shall be stopping for space of thirty days from Dec. 1st, either in this city at the London Coffee house or out at Bethlehem—and I will explain. Enclosed find order,



which you may show to commanding officer at Schoharie, if you have not already killed him. Retain it, as you may need it as a pass on your way. Also enclosed find order for two hundred and fifty dollars in hard money, good on presentation to nearest paymaster. If he can't give you hard money, keep it until you find one that can. Don't accept certificates or scrip. They're rotten. This was made especially for you as you were not regularly enrolled, and have not drawn, nor can you draw any pay for service during recent campaign. No one knows how you came to be with Morgan at Bemus Heights, but Colonel Morgan says you were there, and he has attached his signature to this order. Both he and Sullivan went before the congressional committee to-day in your behalf, and from there followed me to the Board. Am in good health and having a good time. Hope to see you soon.

"Your friend and well wisher,

"ERKURIES BEATTY."

"To PETER EHLERSON, Esq.,

"Captain Morgan's Rifles."

"Captain Morgan's Rifles! What does that mean Tim?"

"It manes yere promoted, me bye. Can't ye git that troo yere thick hid?" demanded Tim dancing with excitement. "Be Gorra! If ye'd a lived wid thim Dootch two year longer, that pall o'yern w'u'd a ben proof against a tomahawk, so 'tw'u'd."

"It does look as if something of that kind was meditated, Tim. But what company am I to be given command of?"

"Gineral Washington and I haven't settled that little matther yit," returned Tim gravely, whereat I laughed. "None o'yere sniggerin' an' sneerin,' ye ongrateful omadhoun," blustered Tim, "or bedad, I'll tell the Gineral to redooc ye to the ranks agin. Kim on up to Major Wulsey now, an' show him

this. I'm wantin' to see the warts o' the turkey gobbler grow rid."

And Tim was satisfied, for Woolsey did look more nearly like a turkey cock than a man. He at first swore I should not go and declared he would not recognize the order, but when the paymaster at Albany, to whom I sent the order, paid over the money, and I set about preparing for my departure, he held his peace. I need not detail at this time the many kind expressions from all the valley, as the news of my intended departure and probable promotion became noised about. I had never known before how many friends I had made there. From up and down the valley they came to bid me good-bye and God speed. Men and women, youths and children—all seemed interested in me.

The next morning I set out with Skenando, who had come in from the upper fort to accompany me down through the Delaware country. As we departed, men, women and children came running out for a parting hand-shake, and as we, having reached the little hill over which the trail at that time ran southwest, turned to wave them good-bye, the crowd set up a hearty cheer, swinging hats, aprons, coats and sunbonnets as long as we were in sight. Three days from that time we reached the Delaware, where we intended striking it, and having procured a canoe, were hurrying south before the river closed. Anchor ice was lodged in all the rifts, worse below Cook house than elsewhere, and while the weather was pleasant, it was very cold. We met with no adventure worth relating, and made good headway for four days thereafter, when one night a cold snap closed the river and we were obliged to stay ashore

and make preparations for my long tramp. We were now about two miles north of the great gap, where the Delaware breaks through the Blue mountains, and I had determined to leave the river, strike west a few miles, thence south across country and shorten the distance, which would be much greater around by Trenton, also safer. As the hour for parting came, I could see that Skenando was deeply affected. He had slept but little during the night, although we were now in a country where there was little, if any danger and I believed that the fact that I was leaving the Indian country, probably for the last time, weighed heavily on his spirits. However, with his usual stoicism, he had made no talk on the subject, as he prepared our breakfast. I also noted he ate but little. After breakfast, he assisted me in making up the heavy pack; that task done, he came up to me, placed a hand on either shoulder and looked up into my eyes.

“Well my Father! I suppose we must part,” said I as carelessly as I could, for I too was somewhat affected.

“Yeeah! Skenando will be childless now,” returned the old warrior mournfully and he heaved a deep sigh. “No friends! No lodge! Owaimee! Hon Yerry! Quedar!—All gone! No one to care for Skenando.”

“Hadn’t you better come with me? I can perhaps find a place”—the old man shook his head sadly. “No, No, Quedar, Skenando too old to go to big village now. He kill Butler an’ then he want to die.”

I took both of his hands in mine, gazed steadily into his eyes a brief instant and then picking up my

rifle, without a word turned and took the trail. At the last bend I looked back, to see him standing there, his arms folded, his eyes seemingly fixed on my retreating form. My own eyes were moist as I went over the ridge from out of his sight.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### AUNT SALLY

**A**S I neared Philadelphia after my twelve days' journey, I was sorely tempted to buy a horse and equipment and bear west out to the home of the Hornes. "What difference could a day more or less make?" I asked myself. "Surely my friends have first claim upon me." But as I reflected that I was practically under orders, and that I had been urged by my friend Beatty to hasten, I decided to first hunt him up and did so. He was overjoyed to see me and was surprised at my quick journey. "You are just in time," he remarked as he hurried me through the house. "Here! Where did you leave your luggage? I'll have one of the boys care for it."

"My luggage is in this pack on my back, Lieutenant."

"What! Have you come through from Schoharie in this style? What did you live on? Where did you stop?"

"I carried my food or killed it as I went along and I slept, rolled up in this blanket. An Indian friend of mine came part way. He cooked for me and I drove the canoe, so long as we were on the river. I left him at the Gap and came across country to gain time. The river is frozen, up toward the mountains, you know."

“ Well! Well! But I wish we had a few hundred more such men as you. We’d clean out these red coats in short order.”

“ Morgan has plenty, as good as I or better, Lieutenant. Where is he?”

“ No he hasn’t. Not one as good as you are, let him tell it. He says you’re the best all round man he ever saw in the woods, or for general use in border warfare. Oh! But I wish you could have heard him the other night. He and General Sullivan had been talking of you,—don’t know how they came to mention you, when I came in on them. You see my Aunt Sally Fisher was in the city—I guess I never mentioned her to you. She lives out in Virginia on the Shenandoah. She isn’t really my aunt, but as she is a cousin of my mother and I was taught to call her aunt when I was a boy, I do that now. Well! She was in the city and as she is an old acquaintance of both Morgan and Sullivan, they were calling on her, when I came in. They had been telling her of their experiences and strange to say, you were mentioned by one and remembered by the other. Morgan grew quite enthusiastic, telling of your Bemus Heights’ exploit, and wound up with these words which he was uttering just as I came in:—‘The best description I can give of this fellow’s personal appearance Mrs. Fisher, is to tell you that he looks exactly as Major Fisher (her husband you know) used to, when he came in from a long surveying trip.’ The Major died when I was a boy, but the Colonel knew him well. At that she grew interested—What’s the matter Quedar. What are you hanging back for? Oh! I forgot. You must be about played out. Can’t you come a little further?”

Colonel Morgan is stopping out here at the end of the hall. Why man! You're white as a rag. I'm sorry I hurried you so."

"That isn't it, Lieutenant!" I managed to say. "Where—where is your Aunt Sally?"

"My Aunt Sally? Why! She's in the house too. She won't leave—but what in blazes do you want of her?"

"I'm afraid—that is, I hope she's a relative of mine too," I blurted out, and here my strength forsook me. I sat down on the stair rail and my pack seemed so heavy that I could not rise.

"Why! My dear Fellow! Are you crazy? You never saw my aunt. You're overwrought—completely knocked out. Come on now to my room, and we'll get a good bottle of port. You need something to brace you up. And say! I forgot to tell you—I've got that matter all fixed up that I gave you an inkling of in my letter. Colonel Morgan is going to make you captain of a company of his riflemen—they call them his, although he isn't in active duty now you know. That's the reason I want you to see him before he gets away."

My strength was coming back now. My weakness had been but momentary, and I struggled to my feet. "Lieutenant, you may think I'm crazed or what you please, but I'm your Aunt Sally's nephew and foster son, Duncan Christopher Fisher, and I was stolen from her by old Hans Diehl and his illegitimate son Benjamin Beacraft, away back in 1758, the year before you were born. You've heard of that, haven't you?"

"Why, yes. I've heard my mother's relatives speak of it, but never Aunt Sally. They say she can't

“speak of it to this day without the great grief coming back to her. Good God, Quedar!” here he grew excited as the full import of my claim dawned on him, “be careful how you say such things as that. I know her highly strung disposition so well. If it should prove untrue, she wouldn’t get over it for months and months. They do say she came near going crazy when that child was stolen. It killed her husband, you know.”

“Well Lieutenant, I’ve not a shadow of proof with me, but all the Mohawk Valley knows that old Diehl brought me there, Beacraft himself told me the whole story not six weeks ago, when he was near to death, and I can tell her where she sat that night they stole me, if she will go with me to the old house. I was past two years of age, you know, and while I can’t remember any one else except her half-witted girl Barbie, who was all the mother I knew for years, I can faintly remember a small woman, who it seems to me I called auntie and could pick her out to-night from among a thousand women. Try me and see.”

Beatty said no more to me, but talking to himself, hurried rapidly up the stairway and I followed close after. He led me at once to Colonel Morgan’s room, but his secretary told us that he was in the social room at the end of the long hall. “Wait here,” said Beatty as he hurried in that direction, and leaning on my rifle, I let my pack rest against the wall and tried to collect my wits. An instant later, I saw the Colonel in his peculiar dress, hardly more civilized than my own, hastening toward me with hand outstretched.

“Glad to see you Ehleron! Glad to see you, I’m sure! Come to my room at once. I want you.



Came right from the woods, I see;” and he led me back the way I had come. Nearly opposite his room, was another hall, branching to the right, and on this corner was a large wall lamp. This branch hall connected with the other main hall, running parallel to the one we were in, and both ran out to the so-called social room, or second floor drawing room of this famous old house. Here we stopped to talk a minute and then started on. I had nearly crossed this branch hall, when I heard a slight exclamation, almost a scream and a woman’s voice immediately after asked: “Who is that man?” I could not control myself further. I turned sharply to the right and faced Beatty and the lady he was escorting. As I did so, she came toward me, her face ashy in its pallor—that shrewd kind face, which I had so faintly, yet so long remembered. A little older now, but still the same face. I pulled off my old hat and running my fingers through my long hair, stood erect, looking straight at her. Colonel Morgan had turned at her exclamation and was coming up behind me. Beatty, as pale as any of us, his eyes glittering with excitement, stood watching with bated breath, while Aunt Sally, with wide open eyes, eyes that seemed to see one long dead, came gliding toward me. She came to within four feet of me, and stood silent for an instant, nervously clutching at her white throat with one hand, the other feeling against the wall, as if for support, her breath coming in quick gasps. Then with a marvellous self control, in a clear steady voice she asked: “Pardon me sir! But who are you?”

“Sally Byrd Fisher, I am Duncan Christopher Fisher, son of your husband’s brother Donald and

his wife Katherine. I was stolen from you in the Shenandoah valley, near Old Staunton in the year 1758, by Hans Diehl, Benjamin Beacraft, his son, and Barbie"—

I went no farther. She was reeling, and I caught her slight figure in my arms. Then she fainted.

"What in h—— is this? What does this mean?" demanded the Colonel, swearing in his excitement as he bustled around me. Beatty seemed utterly helpless and incapable of motion. I was the coolest man of the lot now.

"It means that I've found my Aunt—she that was a mother to me and please God, I'll never let her out of my arms, until she comes back to earth and recognizes me—gives me a name—acknowledges that I am of honest blood and parentage. Cut those cursed straps, you fool!" I continued, forgetting my respect for the colonel. He took no offense at my words however, but drawing my own knife, freed me from that burden, took my rifle and led the way to my Aunt's room, to which I carried her as if she had been a child. I laid her on the bed and knelt beside her. The Colonel and Lieutenant hurried out for help, but before they returned, she had opened her eyes, looked into mine, murmured "Thank God!" and throwing her arms about my neck, had drawn me down to that motherly breast as if I had been a babe. Soon they reentered. She was weeping and as they tiptoed in, I motioned them out. We were alone and though neither had spoken the name of the other, both understood. I let her weep until she had grown calmer and then gently disengaged her arms from my neck and laid her back upon the pillow, where she lay looking at me,

while I held her hands. I could see that her color was returning now, but her eyes kept wandering over my face and she acted as if dreaming. If I moved ever so slightly, her grasp on my hands grew almost painful. Finally I ventured to speak.

“And so you recognized me Auntie?”

“Yes Chrissie! Yes!” she whispered faintly. Then added in a stronger voice—“but what a great fellow you’ve grown to be.”

“Yes. I’m my Uncle’s size they say. Do I look like my father?”

“Yes and no. You look like both your father and uncle. Larger even than your uncle I reckon and with your father’s eyes. Your mouth is your mother’s.” Then she lay sometime silent again. Her color had returned now and she seemed ashamed of her momentary weakness. She commenced to sob hysterically once, but I soothed her and a little later, much to my surprise, she sat up, and passed her hand over my face. “When did you shave last young man?” Here she smiled. I felt embarrassed and looked it.

“I’ve been travelling through the woods Aunt and didn’t expect to—to—”

“To be hugged by an old woman,” she supplied mischievously. “And how about a young one?”

“Well! I have hopes—after I’m shaved and spruced up a bit,” I replied, blushing again in spite of myself.

“Is she far from here? I want to see her? You’re not married are you?” I shook my head. “I knew you weren’t. Where’s that Daniel Morgan? Where’s your Cousin Erkuries? Bring them in at once. I want to show you to them. Run out

now, that's a good boy, while I fix my hair a bit. Strange I should act like this. Indeed! and I always boasting I couldn't faint. Indeed! But I reckon I did. Cried too. Well! I don't have such an experience every day. Heavens, young man! How're you ever going to walk through that door without striking your head? You're a giant. Go quick now. I've made a fool of myself long enough. Don't you leave the house, will you? Bring in the Colonel and Erkuries." She had slid off the bed as she talked in her energetic jerky way and was arranging her hair before the mirror as I started to do her bidding. "Hold on! I've forgotten something. Bend down here, you great— There! now don't say that a woman hasn't kissed you, but do you go shave. My! what a beard! Don't use tobacco, do you? Your uncle never did. I declare I'm young again. Only forty-eight any way. Trot along now. Don't stand there watching me."

I went and soon returned to find my aunt's tongue flying fast as ever. She would put in her short sentences without interrupting any one and she seemed able to think of a dozen things at one and the same time. Only once did she sit quiet for any length of time and that was while I was telling the little party something of my experience with old Hans. Then she sat silent and quite pale, while tears rolled down her cheeks. My story finished, she was herself again. She ordered a lunch and insisted that I stay and eat with the little company. "You're good enough to eat with any one young man, no matter how you look. Your uncle was a comrade of General George Washington in the old war and your father was the leading lawyer in all

Virginia, I reckon. Don't forget that. Wait until I get you rigged out in gold lace and a handsome sword. They'll all look twice at you then."

"Hold on Mrs. Fisher. It's my put-in now."

"Why in the world don't you put in then Colonel? Don't sit there like a block of wood."

"Well! As I was saying—"

"As you were going to say. I didn't interrupt you."

"As I was about to say, Mrs. Fisher,—I'm going to make this young man a captain."

"A captain only is it?" sniffed the little lady in fine scorn. "Indeed! And why shouldn't he be a colonel at least? Isn't he my own flesh and blood and haven't I furnished more men and supplies than any woman, or man either for that matter, in all our valley?"

"But he must learn military tactics Sally."

"Poof! As if that was necessary. I can teach him all that myself. Didn't I ride at the head of the men I took over the mountains to help Sevier and Shelby?"

"Yes by gad! You did and I believe you'd head a charge like a Joan D'Arc to-morrow if 'twere necessary."

"To be sure I would. Why not? A captain indeed! Poof!"

"But Aunt, I don't know that I'm qualified to accept even that position," whereat she turned on me.

"And you a Fisher! That's just the way your uncle always talked and your father too. Did they ever attempt a thing they couldn't do? Stop at captain if you will, but when I get George Washing-

ton's ear, I reckon I'll put a flea in it. Now what time you coming around here to-morrow Daniel?"

"Why Sally, I must go south to-night. I'm needed there. My wife says I'm not at Winchester half as much as I am at Philadelphia, and she's right too. I've this young man's commission all fixed out. He's only to procure his uniform and horse and join his command. Now don't attempt to argue the case with me. It's all I can do now. Had I known the young man was your son I couldn't have done better. It's not General Washington's affair. It's all in the hands of Congress and the board you know. Even if it was, the General's not in the habit of putting young men of first families to the front. He wants men that have won their spurs. Men of experience—"

"Isn't his habit eh? Didn't he or Congress or some one else, create the office of inspector general for that ungrateful Conway? Won't he make that young sprig of a Lafayette, one of the chief officers of the army? Poof! Don't you talk to me Daniel Morgan. I'm going to see the general myself, I am. A Fisher, my husband's brother's son and the last one of the race, a mere captain. Indeed! Poof! If it's money they want represented, and God knows they need money bad enough, don't this young man represent two fortunes, either one of which is greater than Mrs. Washington's?—we all know the general hasn't anything. Isn't he a fighter of experience, this big brawny Scot of mine? What did you tell General Sullivan and me only the other evening? And what did General Sullivan say about the battle of Newtown? Whose idea was it putting in that dam at Otsego? You, yourself waxed so enthusi-

astic in telling me about that affair at Bemus Heights, that I thought you'd been drinking; and he but a stranger then too. Now that you find he's my nephew and a Fisher, you talk 'captain' to me. Poof!" and the doughty little lady snapped her fingers in his face with a vim that made us all roar with laughter.

"Well madame! You carry too sharp a tongue for me. I admit that," laughed the colonel. "See General Washington if you will. I'm sure I wish you success and to prove my sincerity, I stand ready to back up any claim you may make, in any honorable way I can. It is now seven o'clock and I must be going. Quedar,—I beg pardon! Christopher, I mean,—come to my room at once if you will. I have a little business with you. Madame Fisher, I congratulate you on this accession to your family and hope to see you again soon in as good health and as charming as now." Here the handsome colonel with an elegance of manner that was all the more graceful from its naturalness, bent low over my aunt's hand and hurried away.

I explained in as few words as possible the necessity of my following him and was excused on my promise to report early the following morning. "And remember young man," added my aunt, "early, means at least an hour before noon. I suspect you are bound for the house of that young woman. Who is she? Is she poor but pretty? Is she of good family or some common stock? Is she educated? Is—"

"Hold on Aunt. You are asking me more questions than I can answer in a week. Edith Darrah is—"

"What! Edith Darrah, the ward of Jason Horne, the Quaker?" It was Beatty who was speaking now and he seemed greatly astonished.

"The same," I admitted, not without exultation I fear.

"Well! Well! Quedar. You may go. I can satisfy our aunt's curiosity on that score. Why Aunt Sally, he has caught the belle of all the select set of the city. The most radical, unconditional little rebel as well as the most beautiful woman I ever saw, by Jove! One of the best and oldest families too, in all Southern Virginia or the Carolinas. An heiress too, Aunt. Why her father and the husband of that much talked of Lydia Darrah are brothers or cousins. But I thought she was to marry that worthless young whelp of a Major Woolsey, now of Schoharie. One of Gates's pimps. I'm glad to hear it's untrue. Why Quedar, I didn't suspect she was the lady involved in that matter Doctor Kirkland referred to me up at Tioga. He was too delicate to give me any name but Woolsey's you know; and Woolsey—he has affairs all over. Go on Quedar about your business. I can tell Aunt all she wants to know. Go on you lucky dog. That girl! Well, by Jove!"

I kissed the delighted little woman and hurried to Colonel Morgan's room. He stood watch in hand awaiting me and plunged at once into business. "Quedar!—you must excuse my calling you that, but I forget—since my conversation with your aunt I'm inclined to think she may turn your head. Give you an exaggerated idea of your own importance and hers. To tell the truth, she has money,—any quantity of it and more influence with our chief and



Congress too, for that matter, than any other woman I know. Had she been a man, she'd have been prominent in this struggle, for she is one of the brightest minds in these colonies. Then too, she has wealth unbounded and energy and ambition to match. However, she's but a woman and at times as you can see, she's unreasonable. Now my advice to you is to accept this commission I've secured for you. If she gains something better for you, well and good. If not, join me immediately after the coming holidays at my 'Soldiers' Rest' near Winchester. I shall probably be in the Carolinas or Southern Virginia if not at home. Your pay as captain, dates from December 1st. Here is a very handsome sword General Sullivan wished me to present to you with his regards. He has never forgotten your services to the cause at the battle of Newtown and had you come out with him, you would have been promoted to your present position, a month or more ago. When you report, I will see if I have influence enough to assign you to a company of riflemen, either from Pennsylvania or over the mountains. For the reason that your landed interests are so near that mountain section, I shall try and see that you have a band of your own mountaineers. They are the finest men in the world. All big fellows and equally good afoot or on horse. They drill in my peculiar tactics magnificently and one company of them will whip a thousand regulars in the woods, any time. Now I caused your time to be extended here all I could, for no one knew when you could get here. I am glad of it now, for I know your aunt wishes it so. I trust you will use your own excellent judgment

in any effort you may make for your advancement and that you will bear in mind that you have much yet to learn, even though you have seen considerable fighting on the border. I knew both your father and uncle well and they were very able men. Your mother's people, I knew better and better blood never ran. Your aunt is a distant relative of mine and I admire and respect her beyond almost any other woman. It seems to me, you have a career before you and you can depend on me to do all I can for you. Here is a hat, such as the captains of my regiment wear, only finer than any of them have. I ordered it to go with the sword. Now I want you to have as good a time as you can here in Philadelphia and above all things, do not allow anything I may have said, to influence you to refuse any preferment, political or military, your aunt may procure for you, provided of course, you believe yourself competent. Bear in mind one thing—a fellow who can make of himself what you have, under such adverse circumstances, is no fool. Indeed, you seem to me, quite a remarkable man, Quedar. Good-night now. I must dismiss you, as my time is limited." He shook my hand most heartily as he accompanied me to the door.

I lost no time in despatching a darkey I knew across the city for Bob, telling him to come to me at once and to keep my presence in the city a secret. Within forty-five minutes Bob was with me, having ridden back behind my messenger, and a more delighted darkey was never seen. I had brought with me from Schoharie a suit of heavy butternut, the frock of which was trimmed at the skirt, wrists, shoulders and collar, with fringed buckskin. The

small clothes were of the same material as also was a handsome set of leggings buttoned from the knee down, with a strap passing underneath my moccasins. A beautifully worked shirt of doeskin I had, seemed more appropriate to this suit than laces or ruffles. So I wore that. Having been bathed, shaved and my hair put in a queue by the handy Bob, I donned this attire, while he polished up my rifle. New moccasins, of heavy sole and elegant make, Beatty had been saving for me for weeks, as his maker had mistaken his figures and built two sizes too large. Everything seemed provided, and buckling my sword belt outside my frock and donning my hat, I stood forth at half past eight of the clock, a fit representative, as I fancied, of the famous body of riflemen, to which I at last regularly belonged. Leaving Bob to bring my luggage at his leisure, I set out without delay.

The night was clear, crisp and cold. The stars twinkled brightly in the steel-like vault above me, and the snow creaked beneath my feet, as with long and rapid strides I sped toward the object of my tenderest desire. I had tramped eighteen miles that day, with a heavy pack on my back, but I felt as fresh as at morning now. Aye! fresher and better, for I wore the dress of an officer and had name and fortune at my command at last. I made that two miles in less than twenty minutes. As I walked up the broad gravelled pathway, I could see the flicker of the firelight on the polished panels at the rear and sides of the old drawing room. As I bounded lightly up the steps, I came near sprawling over the well remembered settee and involuntarily glanced sidewise at the little arbor, the scene of that memor-

able parting. I was now where I could see in at the window. At the farther side of the great fireplace sat Uncle Jason, his long pipe drawing full and free, his dreamy eyes bent on the flaming wood, next him and nearer me, was Aunt Abigail, not a whit changed, her swift flying knitting needles, flashing in the firelight.

But where was Edith? At this instant, she stepped forth from the little curtained alcove in which the books were kept, one of our favorite volumes in her hand. She turned its leaves and paused at my marking of some passage I had fancied. I could see her lips move as she read it, she smiled, glanced at the old couple to see if they were looking and pressed the page to her lips. And then—but I know not what next happened, nor how I entered the room. I suppose it was by the doors and through the hall, for the window was unbroken, but in that room I was, my sweet Edith in my arms, laughing, weeping, trembling with delight. Aunt Abigail, too much amazed to move, sat there staring at us, while Uncle Jason, his long pipe broken on the hearth where he had dropped it, danced about like a madman, shouting "Hooray!" at the top of his voice.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### I MEET GEORGE WASHINGTON

**I**T was not until I had been at the Horne house an hour or more, that my friends knew all my history, so much had I to tell. We had drawn the big, old-fashioned settee up before the fire. Edith was at my left, next my heart, my arm about her; Aunt Abigail at my right, my other arm about her; Uncle Jason sat just beyond, his face very red from leaning out toward the fire, that he might see my lips and miss not a word of my story.

“And so I must call you Duncan?” remarked Edith with a sigh as she nestled closer.

“And thou art no longer Quedar?” chimed in Aunt Abigail.

“Sweetheart!” replied I, kissing Edith, “to you shall I be Quedar,—any name you choose to call me. Since you chose me when I had no name, any name will sound sweet from thy lips. My dear Aunt and Mother,” and I kissed her also, “to thee I shall I trust be as before—‘my son’ for I know both you and Uncle Jason would have it so. I have heard that title as it was wont to fall from thy lips, when far from these scenes, and it has restrained me many times from some rash speech or action such as the son of such a mother should avoid.” Together the dear old couple reached for the hand nearest them.

Uncle Jason was quickest and pressed it in both his own, while his fine old face expressed his emotions, even before he spoke :

“ Verily! Verily! Quedar. God is indeed good, to give us such a son, for that thou hast been to our hearts these many days. That thou shalt ever be.”

“ Amen!” responded Aunt Abigail fervently, for she had forgotten she was a Quaker.

“ And there is another,” I continued, “ she of whom I have spoken—my Aunt Sally. She too will have some claim on me, for she has accepted me as her own son already and is at this very hour, I have no doubt, lying awake, planning how she can best advance my interests. It would seem to me that God is very good. Circumstances, the deeds of wicked people, robbed me of friends in my childhood, but it seems now as if I was to be more than recompensed. You will find my Aunt Sally a masculine woman, brusque and full of business affairs, such as usually engross men, but with a woman’s heart all the same.”

“ Indeed! But we must know her and tell her how we love her for your sake; and that at once,” broke in Edith.

“ She will receive thee as she does all other ladies—only after she hath disposed of whatever stroke of trade she hath at hand,” remarked Uncle Jason grimly. “ I know her and I know that her errand to this city is one of gain. She hath bought not less than ten thousand pounds of certificates and continental scrip, these last three days, I venture to say, and she hath bought them at the lowest possible figure too. A shrewder, sharper being, man or woman, dwelleth not in all America. Feared, yet loved by

all, her word is one of weight. Her purse—no man knoweth how long it is.”

The next morning however, when we four called, Aunt Sallie drove every one else from the room and kissing the ladies, she shook Uncle Jason's hand with a vigor that none but a strong man usually brings to bear. Shades of Xantippe! But how her tongue did fly! And all the time was she thinking, planning and scheming. Four times did she call in her black man Hosea, who seemed a machine, so fast did he write and as many short crisp letters did she dictate to him. She kept her colored page, Moses, constantly on the jump, bringing in this message, taking out that. She dealt in horses, lands, tobacco and all the while kept up her social chat with the ladies. My head was in a whirl as she finally dismissed us, commanding that I meet her promptly at two of the clock.

When I called at that hour, it was to find seven men awaiting her pleasure,—tobacco buyers and sellers, land agents, money borrowers—no lenders. She had no use for them. I entered and sat down. She paid little attention to me. Each man as admitted—her rule was one at a time—she seemed to read as she might a book. Their deepest designs she uncovered with a question. Their errands she fairly divined and drew all from them in one-third the time I could have done the same. She transacted business involving thousands with those seven men inside of twenty minutes and then gave orders to admit no more. “I'm done with business for to-day,” was her curtly delivered decision. “And now young man,” turning to me, “There's one man I want you to see. I can't send for him. He'd come

perhaps, if I did, but I know the respect due him. You and I must call on General Washington."

"Aunt, may I inquire what business we have with His Excellency?"

"Why! I reckon he'll wish to see you, knowing your father and uncle as he did," replied my aunt, somewhat evasively, I fancied.

"Is that all you wish to see him for, Aunt?" She flushed and looked a trifle annoyed. I felt that I might as well come to the point at once and have done with it. "Dear Aunt, I know your interest in me and also realize that by reason of your position in our valley, your wealth and"—

"Lord bless you lad! The wealth's yours. Not mine."

"Have it as you will, Aunt. I consider it yours, however. As I was saying—owing to your personal acquaintance with His Excellency, the wealth of our family, etc., you can doubtless obtain for me such a position as you covet, although where your ambition would stop, I know not. But we will admit your good intentions, your influence, and all that and grant that you succeed. What have you or I gained?"

"What we went after, haven't we?" she snapped.

"Yes; and more. The enmity of every man over whose head I have been lifted. Look at Major Woolsey! There is a case in point. Well equipped, so far as his knowledge of military tactics is concerned, he has never earned his position. His advancement is not on the basis of merit, for he is a coward in action where Indians must be met. His present position is due entirely to his fawning attitude before Gates. I am as ambitious for myself



as you can be for me. I do most earnestly desire to win promotion, but win it I must, or not possess it. I cannot permit any of my friends to commit nepotism for my sake." She was growing angry now. I could see it in her eyes. I knew that I must use great suavity or have a serious quarrel with her. Her keen disappointment had already disturbed her self-control. I must, at best receive an unmerciful tongue lashing. "I am not going to refuse any position you may gain for me, Aunt,"—she was mollified in an instant,—“but I beg of you not to do this thing just yet. Let me be a captain for a time. I can fill that position with credit to myself and you. I want to go south anyhow. Let me take what Colonel Morgan and my friends have given me and win the rest. Now please grant me this, the first favor I have ever asked of you." And kneeling beside her chair, I possessed myself of her hands and kissed her.

"You great wheedling boy! What a fool you are! Well! Have it your own way for six months, but remember, I shall then expect and demand more."

"If I have won it, Aunt."

"Yes. But you're going to win it."

"Then I'll get it. True merit is rarely kept down." So ended our first difference and I may add, so ended all differences that followed, for my Aunt was a reasonable woman, if you only knew how to approach her.

We rode out that afternoon to pay our respects to General Washington, who was temporarily stopping at the famous "Slate Roof" house. My Aunt had provided for me one of the best mounts to be pro-

cured in the colonies—a stallion that until his fourth year had run at freedom on her range to the north of Staunton. She had brought him up to sell him, but now insisted that I should take him. He was of large size and superb style, and I who had not bestrode a decent animal in nearly four years, felt at first a trifle out of place. However, I soon found my seat and thanks to my early training, I now acquitted myself admirably. My Aunt had sent Moses across the town out to the Horne place to bid Edith be ready for a horseback ride and as we pulled up at the wide gateway, I saw Bob running beside Selim, out around from the stables. That sable diplomat grinned broadly, as taking the head of my horse, he stood waiting for me to lift Edith into the saddle. The keen air put our steeds in fine mettle, and we must have made a striking appearance as three abreast, we cantered down toward the old High street road, the three black grooms following some distance behind. My Aunt's mount was almost equal to my own and I could not but admire her superb management of him. Indeed, she was a more daring horsewoman than Edith, and though she had not as fine a figure, nor yet the youthful bloom that she must have had twenty years or more before, I am quite sure that no other gentleman in all Philadelphia rode out that day with as charming ladies as did I.

Bob and Moses, thanks to the grave dignity of Hosea, played their part well, and when at the hour of four, we drew up before the quarters of His Excellency, there was a general stir and craning of necks among those in waiting. The beauty of the ladies, my costume so like Colonel Morgan's own,

my great size and the three unusually fine horses seemed to impress every one with the idea that some border dignitary was about to confer with our chief. Edith was a little frightened, I thought, at the attention which we were attracting, especially from the imposing Life Guard, but my Aunt was in her element. For once in her life, she seemed perfectly happy. Her bearing—she was but four feet seven it must be remembered—was that of a queen as she graciously nodded at General Washington's Black Billy, who recognized her and came forward from his post at the door, his ivories gleaming. She dropped cards into his copper-colored palm and he disappeared within, to leave us for the ogling of the aides and guard. A moment later the door was thrown open and within, advancing toward us, was General Washington himself, a smile of welcome lighting up his great kind eyes and dying there, for his face was sphinx like. I shall not attempt a personal description of the General at this time, for he has been too much in the public eye, both in person and picture these last thirty or forty years to need it. Pushed ahead by my Aunt, who had not said a word, I stepped before him. He gave a start and stopped. As he stood thus, a look of amazement drove the smile from his eyes and then I saw a gray pallor creeping over his ruddy face. He dropped the hand that had been extended as he first came into view and straightening to his full height, stood looking directly at me. It was an embarrassing situation for me, and I knew not what to say. I turned to my Aunt, who with tears streaming over her cheeks, stood at my right elbow.

“Mrs. Fisher! Sally! What means this? Who

is this young man, and where have you been keeping him?" ejaculated His Excellency in a bewildered, jerky way.

"Whom does he resemble, Your Excellency?" replied my aunt.

"Whom does he resemble! Do you ask me that? Why woman! It is as if your dead husband had stepped from out behind yonder door post. This is my friend, Duncan Fisher, as he looked that morning before we met Beaujeau at Braddock's Field. Young sir! What is your name?"

"Duncan Christopher Fisher, Excellency," said I briefly and he caught my hand. He did not release it either, but forgetting the ladies, drew me in. Then remembering himself, he started back confusedly, again came back to me, saying: "Pardon me, sir!" and going once more out into the hall, led the ladies in. Having seen them seated, he walked before me again and looked steadily at me, until beneath his gaze I again became embarrassed. My Aunt had meanwhile been weeping. I did wish she would stop and say something. My wish was gratified, for at this instant she raised her face from her handkerchief and began talking. I have heard much in my time of and about the languorous speech of southern ladies; the stately manner of ye olden time, but there are exceptions and my Aunt was now proving it. Her tongue flew like a queue ribbon in a stiff breeze, and when she ran out of breath, she hung long on the word "a-n-d," drawing in a fresh supply, without a break in her story. She told all about me. My life as a child; my surroundings; my adventures with the Indians; how I came to the Hornes in Philadelphia; my exploits in the northern

campaigns; my recent promotion; and wound up with; "and now Excellency, he's made me promise I wouldn't ask another promotion for him until he earned it."

The grave man listening so politely before her, looked absolutely solemn as she finished. For an instant, I never saw a man look more so. That he was making an effort, I could plainly see. At one time his face had a woe-begone expression. Then I saw that smile struggling into his eyes. It twitched the muscles of his firm mouth and finally gaining control of his entire face, he suddenly opened his mouth and roared with laughter. In after years I knew him intimately, but rarely did I see him give way in any degree to mirth and never as on this occasion. I laughed myself. Edith laughed. My Aunt did not. She was angry.

"What are you laughing at, General George Washington? I've known you forty years—before the other war, I'd have you know. I knew you when at fourteen you were appointed to a commission in the British navy, through the influence of your brother Lawrence. I saw you, a great gawky boy you were too, come blub—crying up from the river, following after your luggage, when your mother changed her mind and wouldn't let you go. Are you laughing at me?"

"Madame! Mrs. Fisher! Sally!" the General had interjected appealingly as she went along. He seemed to dread her sharp tongue, as did all the rest, and to court her good graces. "Really, my dear Madame! Really Sally! you don't think I need to be reminded of all that again. Why will you prod me

with that incident that no one else remembers? Spare me! I beg your pardon for any rudeness. Indeed I do! But I was so amused by the manner in which you kept your promise to our young friend here. That was you and no one else. No other woman would have kept a promise so well and at the same time managed to have her own way." He now burst forth again and laughed until the tears stood in his eyes. "This young man is sensible," he continued, as he turned to me and laid his hand on my knee. "I will see that he is promoted when he does earn it, as I have little doubt he will. As yet, these cases are in the hands of Congress or the board, you know. Even the commission of a captain comes from that body. The general in chief of all the army, can do little more than recommend. Any other general or even a colonel can do as much. This I trust, will soon be changed."

Thereafter, for a space of thirty minutes, we sat talking, the General asking me many questions about matters at the north. He was now very dignified and slow. Almost stolid at times, but his questions were to the point and showed his grasp of the entire situation. His knowledge of detail was remarkable, for once when I made a slight misstatement as to the situation of our forces at the first battle of Bemus Heights, he corrected me instantly. As we talked, he seemed much drawn to me and I in turn, felt as much at ease in his presence, notwithstanding the position in which the garrulous tongue of Aunt Sally had at first placed me, as if he had been my own father. How long we might have stayed, I know not had not a servant brought in candles. This re-

mind me that it was time to go, and I arose to make excuses for having taken up so much of his time.

“On the contrary my dear sir, it is I that have detained you; and neglected these ladies too, I fear. Especially Miss Darrah here, with whom I have hardly exchanged a word.” Here he turned to my Edith, who with all the sweet dignity of which she was ever mistress, charmed the great man as she always did all my friends. He inquired as to her relationship to his friend Lydia, and when we departed that afternoon, it was with a promise to dine with “Mrs. Washington and myself,” as His Excellency put it, two weeks from that date. He had but just come into town from Morristown, having left there on the eighth and was expecting to meet Mrs. Washington. He had received a letter instead however, stating her coming had been delayed two weeks. We must dine with them when she came into town, and we did. It was almost two years after that, before they entertained us again and then we came yet farther—in the pleasant fall weather this time, from our old place south of Staunton, clear to Mount Vernon, which for six long years before this, had not once seen its master.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### EDITH

**A**FTER leaving General Washington on that afternoon of our first meeting, Aunt Sally announced her intention of riding home with us for the evening. This pleased Edith, as I could see, and we both anticipated the flurry my Aunt would create in the quiet household of the Horne's. In this, we were doomed to disappointment, for her advent was that of an old acquaintance. She had met Uncle Jason many times and knew him well. Aunt Abigail she had hardly noticed, so taken up with Edith had she been that morning the ladies called upon her at the inn; but now they took to one another, as opposites often do. At dinner they sat side by side and had their heads together over sundry recipes for syllabub, shrub and conserves, discussing with deep interest all the intricacies and mysteries of the housewife's art. I could see that Edith was greatly interested in their talk, but to please me she took part in the political and business discussion Uncle Jason and I were engaged in, and, manlike I was flattered and happy. After dinner we all gathered before the great fire and there for a time, the older ladies pursued their discussion, including needlework now, in which like all else pertaining to housekeeping or business, my Aunt seemed past mistress. We three, Uncle Jason,



Edith and I pursued our discussion, until Uncle Jason falling asleep over his pipe, Edith and I were left to one another. Thus occupied, I noted not the lapse of time and know not how long we should have remained in that sweet communion, when all were brought back—Uncle Jason from his sleep, Edith and I from the Elysian fields in which we had been wandering hand in hand, by Aunt Sally, who as I first remember, was inquiring when the wedding was to occur.

Both Edith and I confusedly sat apart and admitted we had not got that far yet; whereat my blunt brusque little kinswoman proceeded to take the matter in hand and plan as if we were in no wise concerned. She would have liked much to have seen me married at the old place, but of course that was not to be thought of. After such a long engagement—she assumed that it had been long and no one disputed her—the holidays now at hand, were the best time in the world. I had little time she was sure, to attend to the management of the estate, and as she had managed it for twenty-five years, she reckoned she could a while longer. My pay as captain would not in her judgment suffice for my needs, especially now that I was about to take a wife, and so the estate stood ready to pay me an income of \$2,000 a year sterling, until such time as I should retire from the army and take my own private affairs in charge. The wedding she would have made a grand affair, in Christ Church at least, but here both Edith and I interposed. The rector we had known and loved had, like Duche of Christ Church, followed Howe. The new man at Christ Church neither of us knew. The chapel was a ruin.

“Well! But Lordy Heavens! You’ve got to be married somewhere and somebody’s got to do it,” snapped my Aunt.

I ventured to remark that in all civilized communities, the bride named the day and place, the groom looked after other matters. I didn’t know, of course, what the custom might be in the Shenandoah. Then there was a scene and I was rescued from my aunt’s hands by Edith, who announced her choice as this old drawing room in which we had spent so many happy hours. I nominated Mr. Kirkland to officiate, and peace reigned. Indeed, Aunt Sally offered no objection to all this, and so it was arranged. She had intended going home on the morrow, but she would send Hosea instead, and would come down from the inn and help arrange matters, at least three or four hours each day. Come to think of it, she had promised “George and Martha” to come and dine with them anyway, and she reckoned she must remain in town and keep her word good. I fear she would have had us married within two weeks if she could have had her way, but we begged her to allow us thirty days more of courtship and to this she graciously consented.

And thus it came about that on the evening of Tuesday, January 11th, 1780, Edith Darrah and I were made husband and wife. There have been pretty home weddings. Under proper circumstances they are ever so, but ours—Well! It seems to me as I look back at it now after all these years, the beginning of heaven. A heaven I have enjoyed for nearly sixty years. A heaven we both have faith to believe shall extend through all eternity.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### HOME AT LAST

**I** HAVE often wondered why I was permitted to go south that spring of 1780, and I do believe that had it not been for Colonel Morgan's desire to have me near him, I should not have gone, but have been sent north again instead. There were few military operations in northern Virginia all that year, and the regiment to which I was assigned had practically one long furlough all that delightful spring and summer. To be sure we heard much from the south, where the struggle was raging, and were constantly on the alert for a call, and had Col. Morgan at any time sent an express up the valley, we should have rendezvoused at Winchester within a week. The journey down across country was not half as difficult for the ladies as I had supposed it would be. We set out in March, escorted by forty-two of Morgan's men, who were going to their homes in the Shenandoah and vicinity, and in regular caravan style, my aunt's new Conestoga wagons, the first I had ever seen, carrying our luggage, made good time over the roads as yet unbroken, but quite rough. By night we stopped at the numerous inns or taverns along the great highway to the "Shandydo," as it was then called, and by day we rode in the saddle from twenty to thirty miles, without

discomfort. At "Saratoga," or "Soldier's Rest," as Colonel Morgan's place near Winchester was called, we stopped, the sudden departure of the frost king having rendered the roads so bad that this was necessary. Here as honored guests, we rested up nearly a week. From there southwestward, we travelled under a much smaller escort, although five of my aunt's slaves had joined us at Winchester, and rode on up the North Fork valley, making the distance of one hundred and fifty miles in four days, so eager were we to reach our journey's end. To Edith and me this was a new country, for I had scant remembrance of it.

It was just at nightfall, of an early spring day, the most charming time of year in Virginia, that we turned from the main highway, and escorted by a great throng of whites and negroes, walked our worn horses up through the grounds. The news that my aunt had found "Massa Jedge's" long lost boy had preceded us, for Hosea had arrived six weeks before, and great was the excitement. Aunties who had carried me in their arms when I was a babe, yet older "mammies," "aunties" and "uncles" who remembered when my mother, father and uncle were "chillun," lined the winding drive from the highway up and raised their voices in vociferous welcome. It reminded me somewhat of the reception accorded a band of Iroquois hunters or fishermen from distant lakes, except that there was here more noise of human voice and less of dogs. However, my aunt was an admirer of "man's most faithful friend," and even this sound was not entirely lacking, two great deep voiced house dogs of the mastiff breed, and a large and noisy pack of

fox hounds lending their efforts to the general commotion and racket.

The house, though sitting low on the ground, was larger than Sir William's own, with wide front and rear verandas, immense stretch of sloping roof, and with ample slave quarters, stables and hay and tobacco barns stretching away to the rear. The beauty of the sloping grounds and the neatness of the white painted buildings showed the thrift as well as the taste of this capable mistress, and the freshly furrowed fields stretching up back from the little river proved also that she knew how to so organize her dependents, that business should go on, whether or not the presiding genius was present. As we gave our horses to the half dozen "boys" who tumbled over one another to assist, and mounted the steps to the great deep veranda, my aunt turned and looked out through the vista the bending trees made. Her shining, moist eyes, even that one brief instant seen, proved to us her deep love for this magnificent estate, and I fancied that I detected a shade of regret on her face as she bade me look on my own. I must have been mistaken, however, for turning quickly, she reached up, drew my face down to hers and kissed me, then kissed Edith and taking an arm of each, led us into the wide hall running through from front to rear. At one side, just beyond the stairway, a huge open fire was blazing. Before this she stopped and looking up into our faces again, said: "Thank God my children for this home coming. 'Tis truly the happiest I have known in twenty-two long years. I can never tell you how heartily I welcome you, so I reckon I won't try."

She declared we should be guests that evening,

and so she presided at the board. The following morning, however, she called in all the eighty retainers at the home plantation, and as they crowded about with wondering eyes, she led us in and solemnly installed me as master, Edith as mistress. "Hear you all," began her solemn proclamation, "and let your children know, that I, so long mistress here, do declare this my son and nephew, Duncan Christopher Fisher, head of this house, and his wife, Edith Darrah Fisher, mistress of it. May especial wisdom from the Most High guide and direct these dear children of ours, and may the blessing of God be with them, their descendants and with us all."

Every head was reverentially bowed as she finished and deep and fervent "Amen" arose from all sides. Then filing past us as we arose in our places, each individual shook our hands, and more than one pair of dusky lips touched Edith's shapely fingers.

"An' we uns'll allus love de ole Missy jess de same!" ventured one old white woolled uncle, as with hat held close against his broad chest, he paused before her.

"That you must, uncle! That we all will!" I shouted, as I threw my arm about her and shook hands with "Pa Bijah" once again. And there amid those patriarchal surroundings my domestic life began.

It has always seemed to me that no man on earth had a more pleasant home circle and few as pleasant, and never in all the succeeding years have I spent a night away from it, without, as when at home, calling down the blessings of God upon it. Honors, riches, a large portion of earth's blessings have been ours. Children and grandchild-

dren, kind and considerate, have blessed our prime and nurtured us in the decline of our lives. Aunt Sally is no longer with us; all that was left to us of her, save a tenderly cherished memory, we laid in Christ Church ground many years ago. And there we shall probably be laid, when our time shall come to join the vast majority. How soon or where that time shall find us, makes but little difference. We trust in the mercy of God and hope that we are prepared. It is the way of all earth, and our lives have, even now, been prolonged beyond the lot of most men and women. We are thankful for this, for it insures us but a short separation. Whoever goes first will leave the other but a little time to wait.

And now, while waiting, we have together written these memoirs. By reason of their truth and the harsh truths we have been obliged to state of many, whose descendants of the first generation are yet living, we have decided that for a life time at least, these shall not appear in print. It will not be until long after we and those they may affect are dead and gone, that the world shall know all we have written. When having writtten all but the last half of the last chapter the other evening, we looked them over and reviewed the past they told of. It was then that I turned to my Edith, a silver haired, sweet faced old lady now, but my sweetheart still, and I said:

“Dear one, is there anything in this record you would change?”

“Nothing, Quedar,” she whispered softly, “unless it be that you make more prominent the fact that the good Lord intended us for one another,

and that He gave to me the best husband ever woman had."

"And to me the best and truest wife," I replied, as I drew her to me. And there sitting on that old settee, we two, lovers all our lives and lovers yet, even in our eighties, looked into the firelight and saw faces and forms that we had known and loved long, long ago,—that we confidently expect to see and love again. The faces and hands of those gone before, even more than the faces and hands of the living, seem beckoning us. We have lived our lives, attaining blessings such as are accorded to few in this earth. By God's mercy, we hope and trust that we shall receive even more in the hereafter—the ineffable peace and joy of an eternal life.

THE END

